

MARVEL
COMICS
GROUP **12¢**

IND.

the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN

APPROVED
BY THE
COMICS
CODE
AUTHORITY

20
JAN



**HOW CAN SPIDEY
BATTLE A FOE WHO
IS STRONGER THAN
HE IS???**

**YOU'RE ABOUT TO
MEET ONE OF MARVEL'S
NEWEST, GREATEST
ARCH-VILLAINS...**

**"THE
SCORPION!"**



"THE COMING OF THE SCORPION!"

OR: "SPIDEY BATTLES SCORPEY!"

BE SURE TO KEEP YOUR EYE ON THE STARTLING SCORPION!
WE PREDICT THAT HE'S DEFINITELY A CANDIDATE FOR THE
SUPER-VILLAINS' HALL OF FAME!



MANY READERS HAVE ASKED
WHY STAN'S NAME IS ALWAYS
FIRST ON THE CREDITS! AND
SO, BIG-HEARTED LEE AGREED
TO PUT STEVEY'S NAME
FIRST THIS TIME! HOW
ABOUT THAT?!!

ILLUSTRATED BY:
STEVE DITKO
WRITTEN BY:
STAN LEE
LETTERED BY:
S. ROSEN

... BUT WE STILL HAVE
A FEELING THAT SNEAKY
STAN PUT SOMETHING
OVER ON US! ANYWAY,
NOW IT'S TIME FOR
THRILLS, CHILLS, AND
SPILLS ...

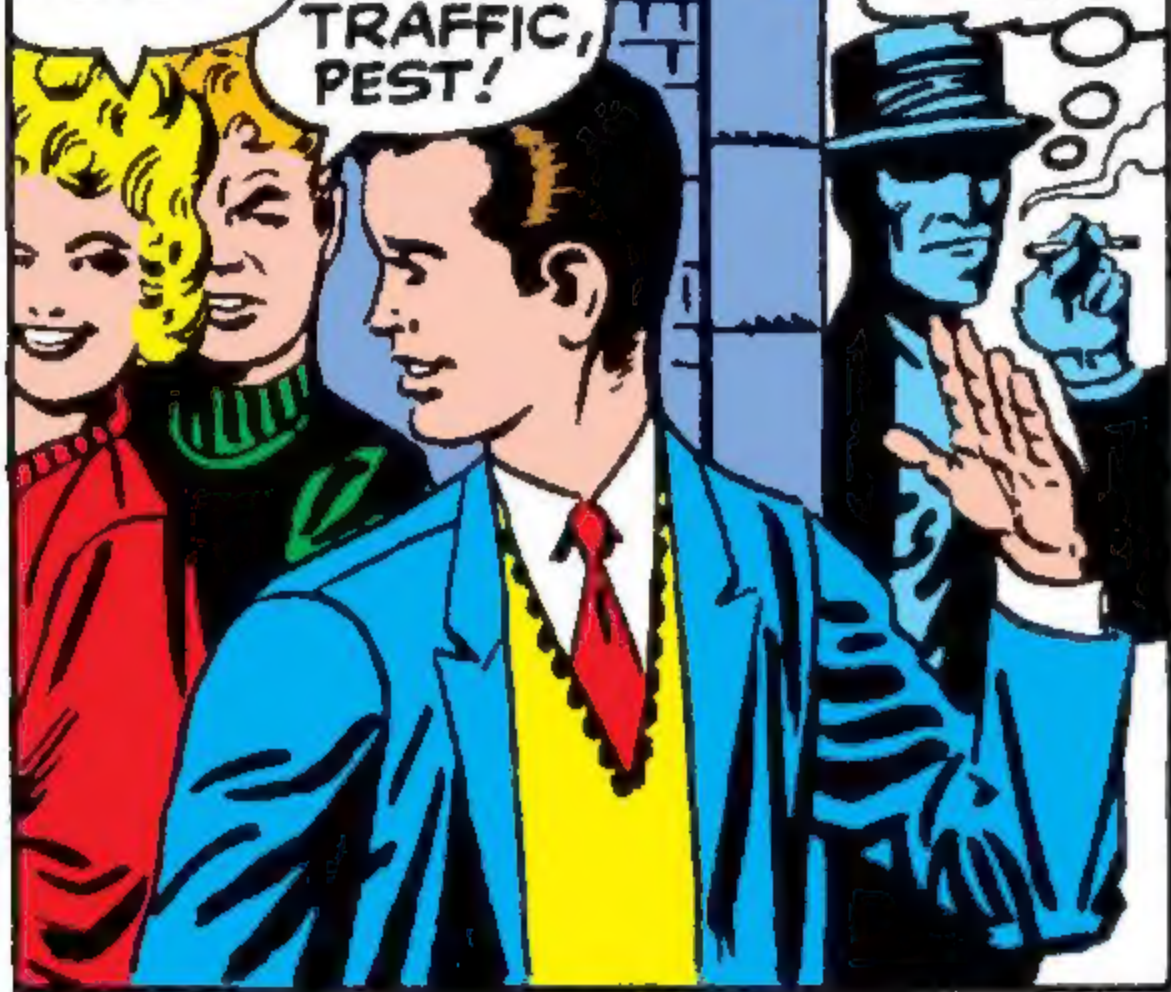
REMEMBER THE MYSTERIOUS FIGURE WHO FOLLOWED PETER PARKER HOME FROM SCHOOL LAST ISH? HERE HE IS AGAIN, THE NEXT DAY, STILL LURKING IN THE SHADOWS, WAITING FOR THE UN-SUSPECTING TEEN-AGER...

SO LONG, LIZ! SEE YOU AROUND, FLASH!

'BYE, PETEY!

GO PLAY IN TRAFFIC, PEST!

AHH, THERE HE IS!

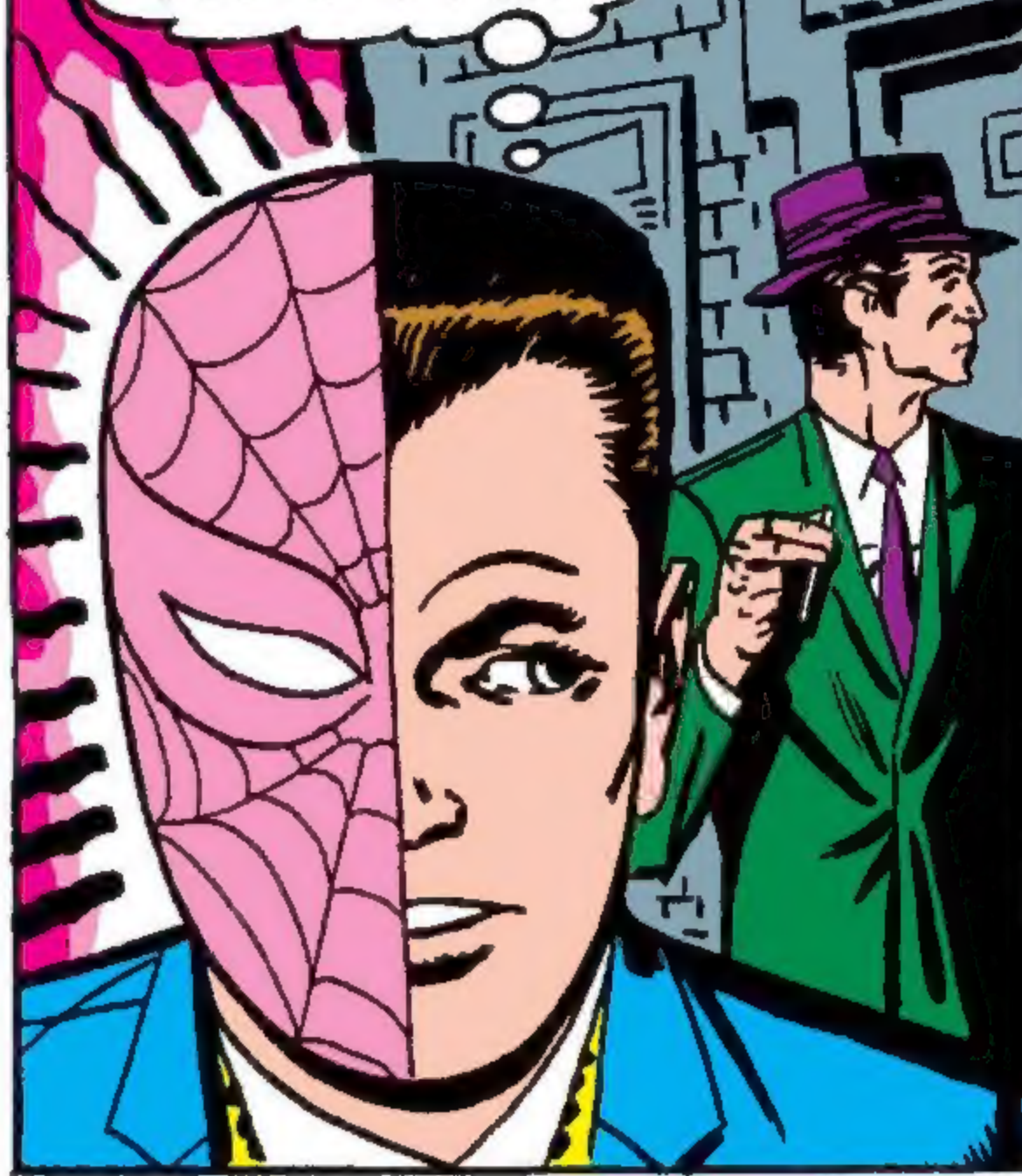


BUT THIS TIME, PETER'S PUR-SUER GETS OVERCONFIDENT AND FOLLOWS JUST A BIT TOO CLOSE!

MY SPIDER SENSE IS TINGLING! THERE'S SOME SORT OF DANGER NEAR!



IT'S COMING FROM BEHIND ME! NOBODY THERE BUT THAT STRANGER, TRYING DESPERATELY TO PRETEND HE'S AN INNOCENT PEDESTRIAN!

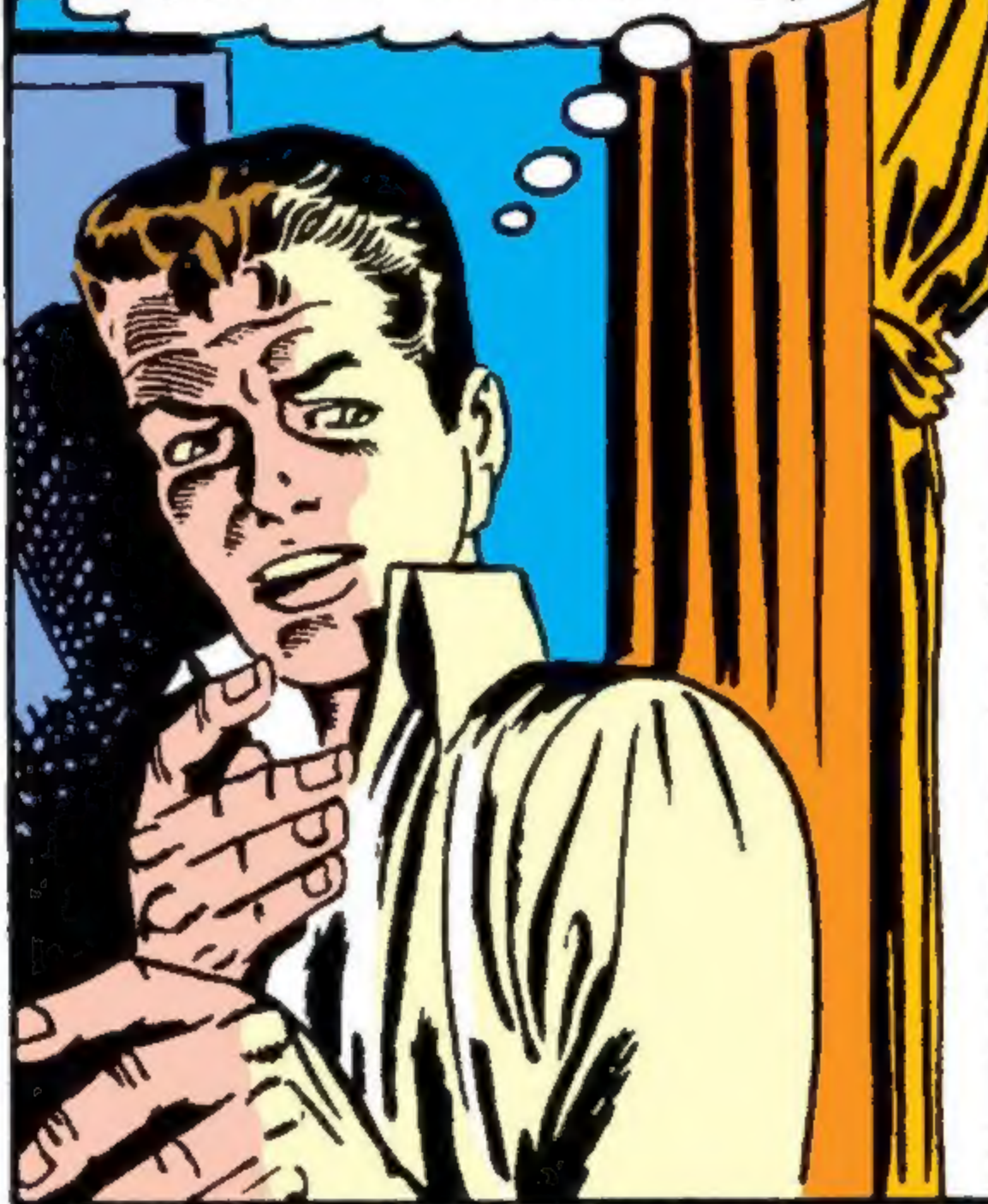


THEN, AFTER PETER HAS REACHED HOME...

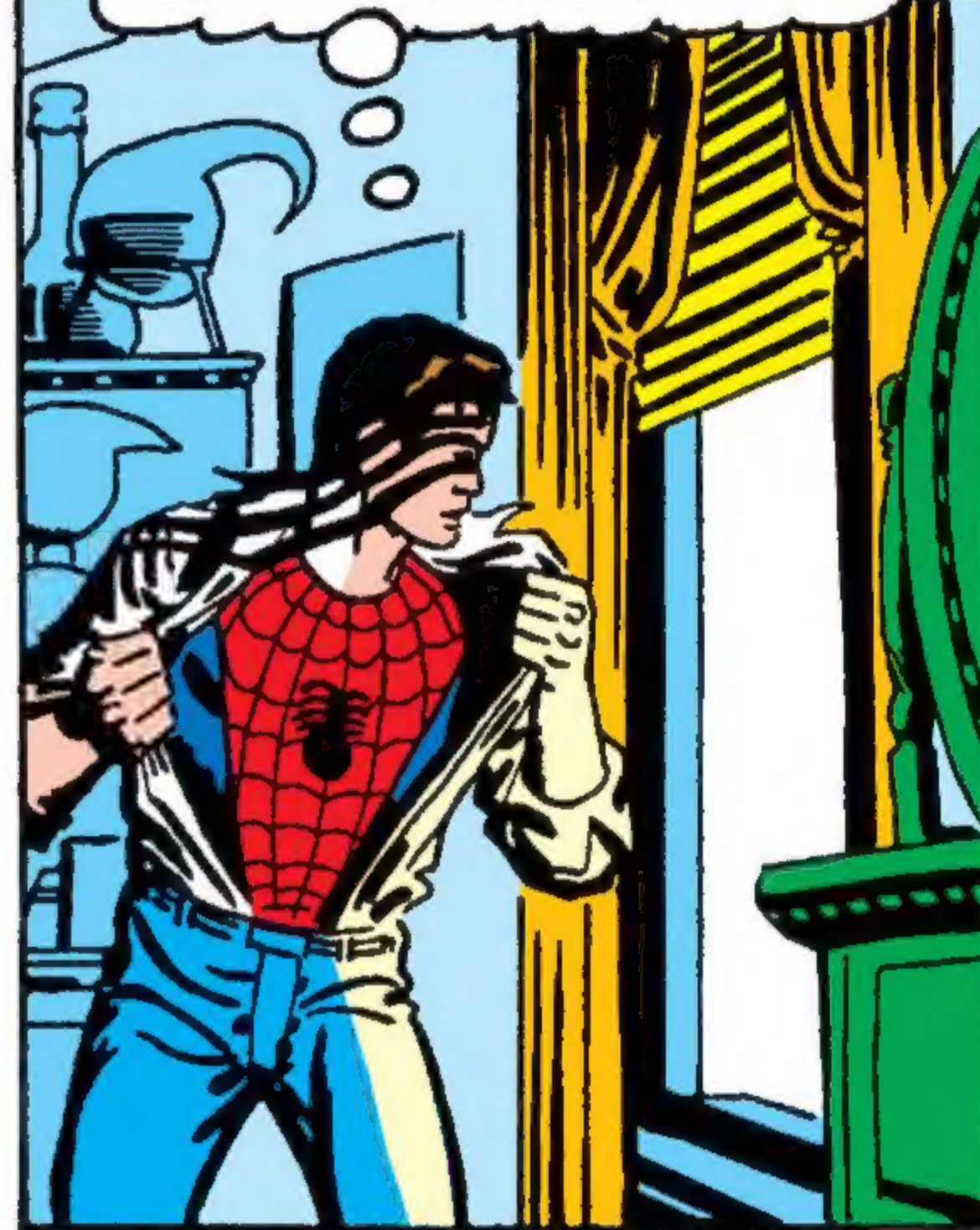
I WAS RIGHT! HE'S WATCHING THE HOUSE NOW! BUT, WHY...??



I NEVER SAW HIM BEFORE... DON'T KNOW WHO HE IS! CAN IT BE THAT SOMEBODY HAS FIGURED OUT MY SECRET IDENTITY AT LAST??



WELL, THERE'S ONLY ONE WAY TO FIND OUT! AND, WHAT I HAVE TO DO NOW, HAD BETTER BE DONE BY... SPIDER-MAN!



HE'S WALKING AWAY! THAT SUITS ME FINE! HERE'S WHERE THE FOLLOWER BECOMES THE FOLLOWED!!



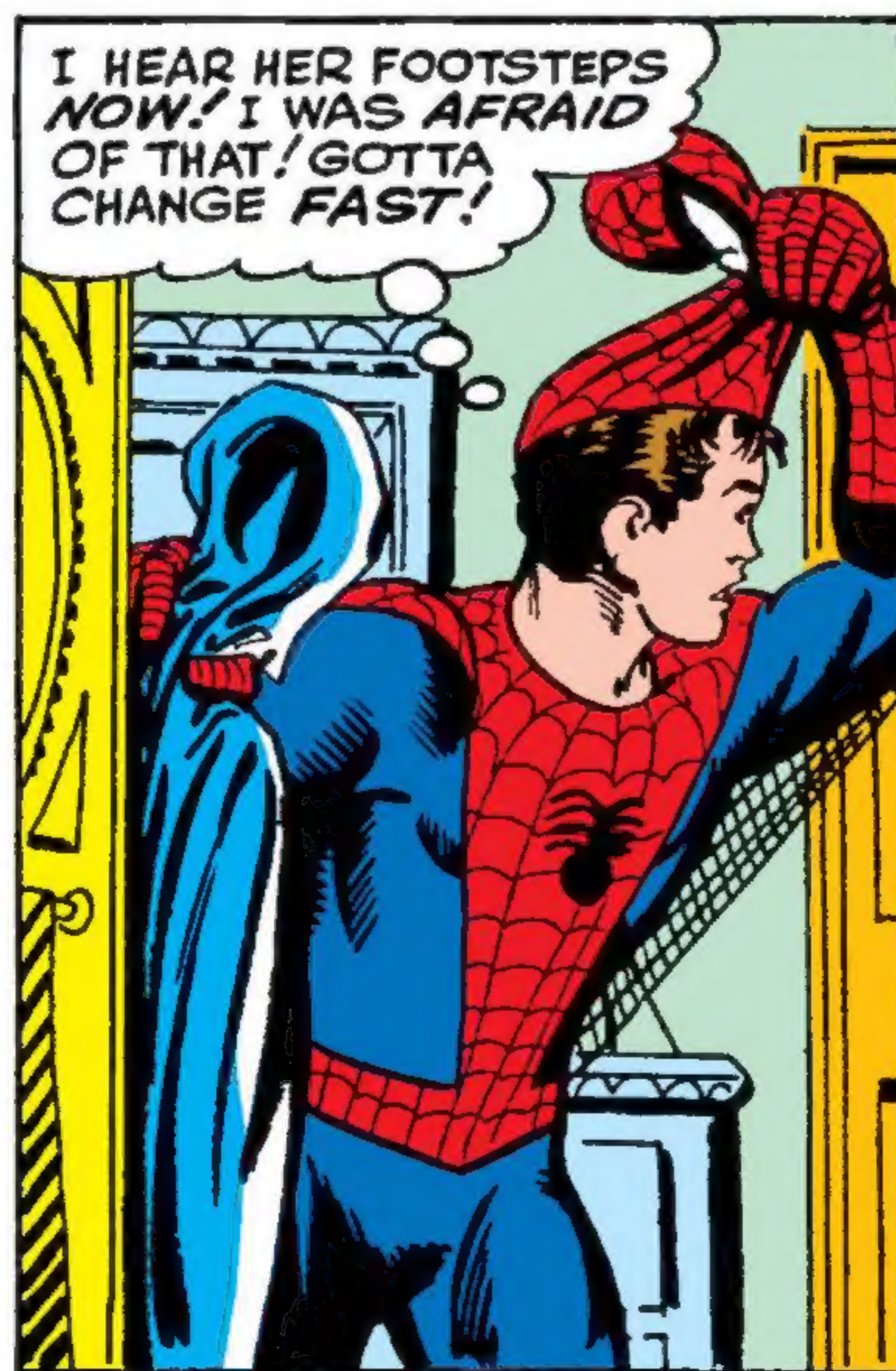
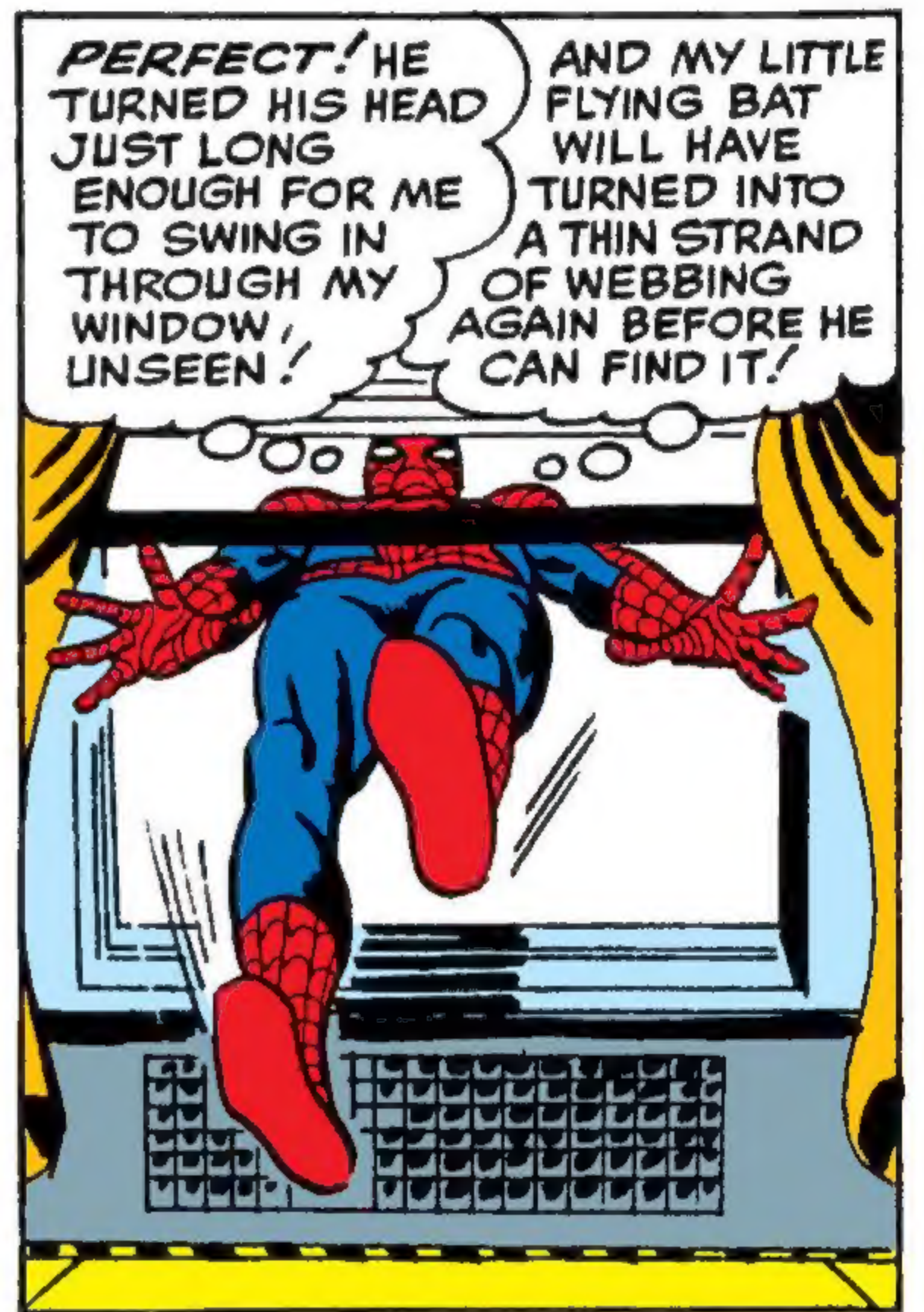
TWO BLOCKS LATER...

IT'S NO TRICK TO FOLLOW SOMEONE SILENTLY WHEN YOU'VE GOT THE POWER OF A THOUSAND SPIDERS!



HE WENT INTO THAT PHONE BOOTH! WHO CAN HE BE CALLING?





THEN, AFTER HIS AUNT HAS LEFT...

HE'S OUT THERE! THERE'S NOTHING I CAN DO BUT LET HIM *CONTINUE* THIS CAT AND MOUSE GAME, UNTIL I CAN FIGURE OUT WHAT HE'S AFTER!

BUT I MUST BE CAREFUL TO DO NOTHING TO REVEAL MY SECRET IDENTITY TO HIM!

AND, THE NEXT MORNING...

"OLD FAITHFUL" IS STILL THERE! LOOKS LIKE HE'S MAKING A LIFETIME JOB OF THIS!

WELL, AS LONG AS I'M AWARE OF HIM, HE CAN'T ATTACK ME BY SURPRISE!

BETTY USUALLY GETS TO WORK EARLY ON SATURDAY, SO I'LL PAY HER A VISIT!

AND, IN THE NEWSPAPER OFFICE OF J. JONAH JAMESON, PUBLISHER, AND UNDISPUTED HEAD OF THE "I HATE SPIDEY" BOOSTERS...

WHAT'S THIS NEW ITEM? SOME NUTTY SCIENTIST CLAIMS TO HAVE FOUND A WAY TO CAUSE ARTIFICIAL MUTATIONS IN ANIMALS! HMPH! BIG DEAL!

WHY DO MY EDITORS BOTHER SHOWING ME PROOFS OF EVERY UNIMPORTANT STORY THAT COMES ALONG?

NOW, IF SOMEONE DISCOVERED AN *ANTI-SPIDER-MAN* SERUM, THAT WOULD BE A STORY! OH, HOW I HATE THAT WEB-SPINNING, WALL-CRAWLING MASKED MENACE!

IF ONLY THERE WERE SOMEONE STRONGER THAN HIM THAT I COULD HIRE TO... HEY! WAIT A MINUTE! THAT'S IT! THAT'S THE ANSWER!

LET'S SEE NOW... WHAT'S THE NAME AND ADDRESS OF THAT EGGHEAD WHO CAN CAUSE ARTIFICIAL MUTATIONS??

THIS IS MY GREATEST INSPIRATION! I'LL RID THE WORLD OF SPIDER-MAN... ONCE AND FOR ALL! I'LL PROBABLY GET A MEDAL!

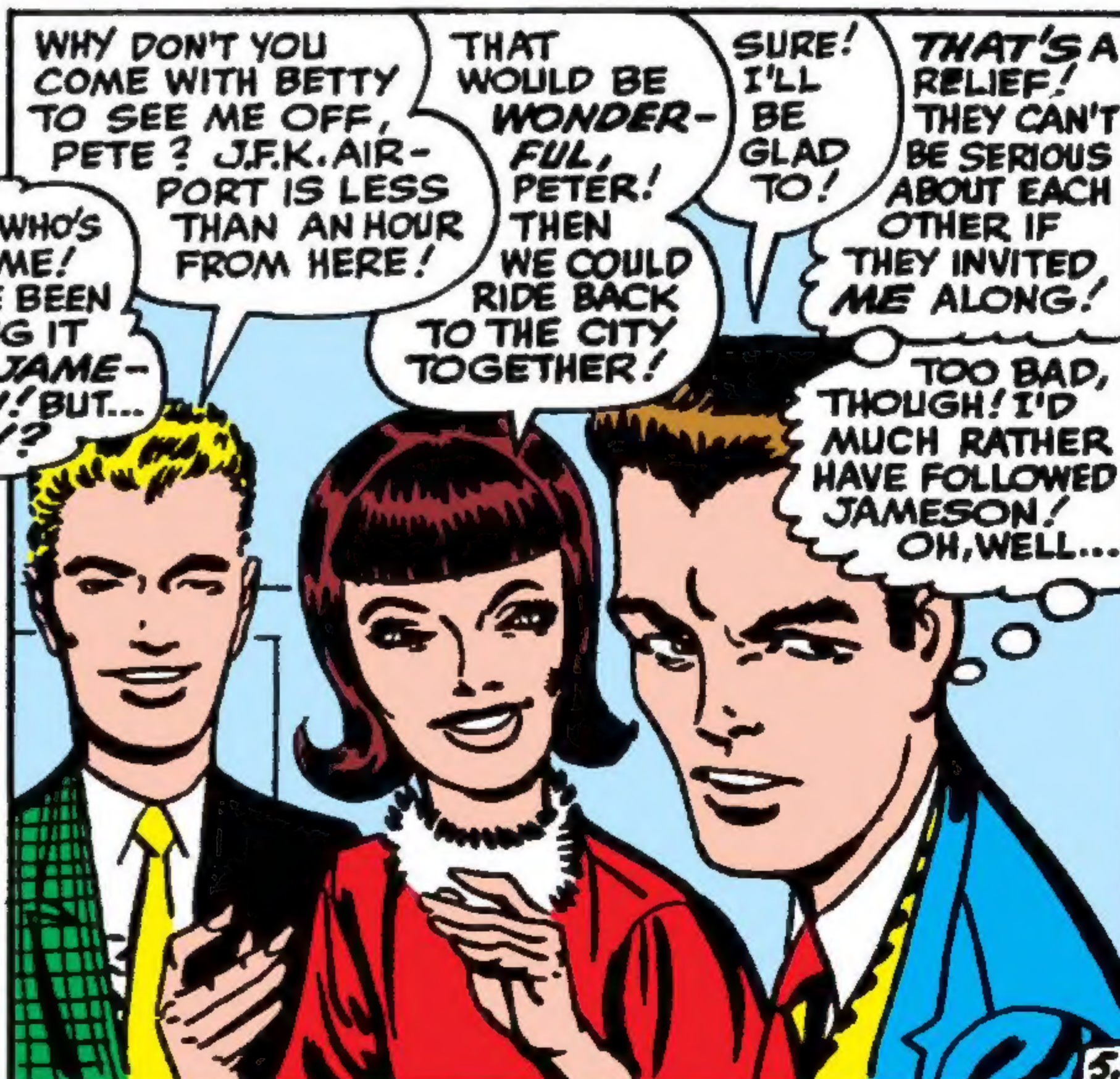
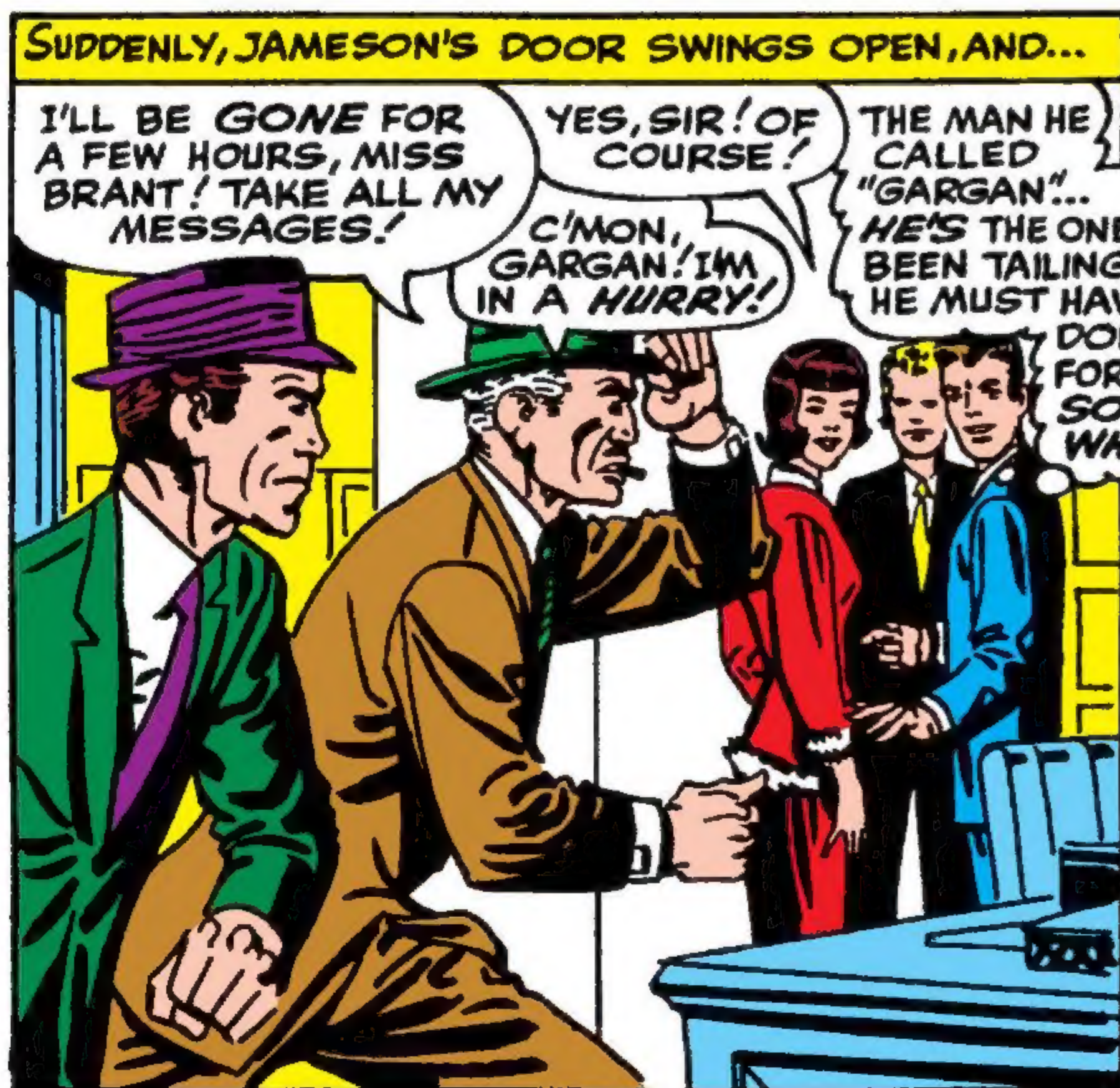
HERE IT IS... DR. FARLEY STILLWELL! THIS IS PERFECT! HE LIVES RIGHT HERE IN THE CITY!

AND I HAVE JUST THE MAN I NEED TO HELP ME WITH MY BRILLIANT STROKE OF GENIUS!

MEANWHILE, OUTSIDE THE DAILY BUGLE BUILDING...

HE'S PROBABLY GOING IN TO SEE HIS GIRL FRIEND! THIS IS MY CHANCE TO TAKE A BREAK!

I'LL RUSH OFF AND REPORT TO THE BOSS NOW!



A SHORT TIME LATER, AT THE LABORATORY OF DR. FARLEY STILLWELL ...

YOU MEAN YOU ACTUALLY MUTATED A RAT SO IT CAN SWIM LIKE A FISH ... AND ENABLED A FISH TO BREATHE AIR LIKE A RAT?

WELL, "MUTATED" IS NOT THE EXACT SCIENTIFIC WORD, MR. JAMESON! ... BUT I BELIEVE YOU SUMMED IT UP ACCURATELY ENOUGH!

MY WORK, IF PROPERLY DEVELOPED, MIGHT BE OF GREAT VALUE TO FARMERS, BOTANISTS AND THE LIKE! I'M DELIGHTED THAT YOU'VE SHOWN SUCH INTEREST! AN INFLUENTIAL MAN LIKE YOU, PUBLICIZING MY FINDINGS, COULD FURTHER THE CAUSE OF SCIENCE IMMEASURABLY!



SURE, SURE! NATURALLY! BUT IT'S NOT **SCIENCE** I'M INTERESTED IN RIGHT NOW! I WANT YOU TO WORK ON A **SPECIAL PROJECT** FOR ME! IF IT WORKS, I'LL PAY YOU \$10,000!

I'M A RESEARCH SCIENTIST! I DON'T ACCEPT PRIVATE JOBS FOR PAY! AND YET... WITH \$10,000 I COULD BUY NEW EQUIPMENT... NEW MATERIALS! I..I'M JUST NOT IN A POSITION TO **REFUSE** YOU, MR. JAMESON! WHAT IS YOUR PROJECT?

I WANT YOU TO TRY YOUR EXPERIMENT ON A **HUMAN BEING**! I WANT YOU TO GIVE A MAN POWERS WHICH ARE GREATER THAN **SPIDER-MAN'S**!

I HAVE ENOUGH SERUM... I HAVE THE KNOW-HOW... AND, YET, IT MIGHT BE **DANGEROUS**! I CAN'T GUARANTEE THE RESULTS!

THAT'S OKAY, DOC! I'M WILLING TO CHANCE IT!



MOMENTS LATER... AFTER DR. STILLWELL HAS SHAVED GARGAN'S HEAD...

I CAN GIVE YOU THE POWERS OF A **SCORPION**, FOR INSTANCE! YOUR BODY WOULD BECOME MORE POWERFUL THAN SPIDER-MAN'S... BUT I DON'T KNOW HOW IT WOULD AFFECT YOUR **BRAIN**!

WHO CARES? I'M GETTING \$10,000 ALSO FOR MY PART IN THIS... AND I'D DO ANYTHING FOR THAT KIND OF DOUGH!

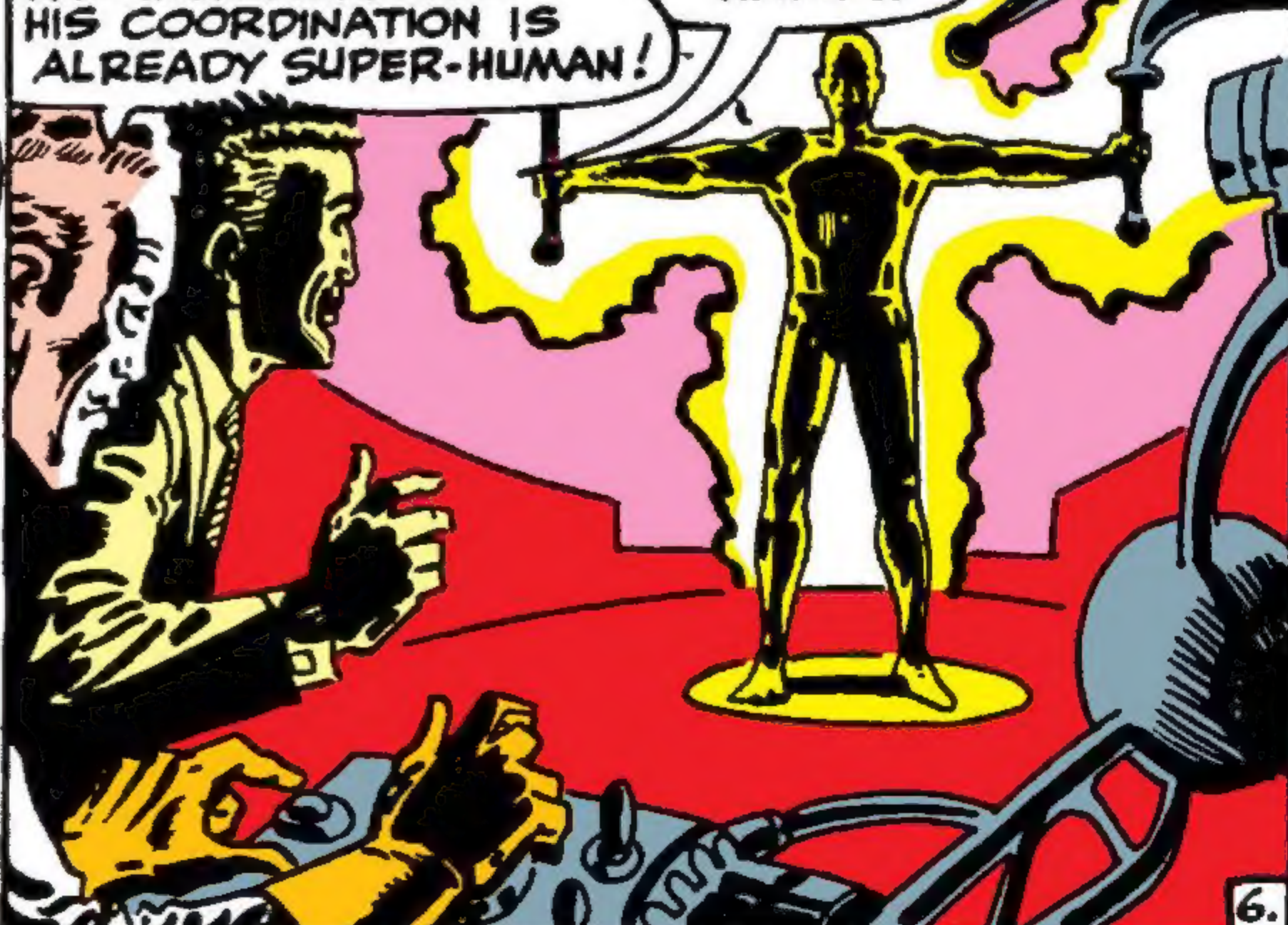
VERY WELL, THEN, DRINK THIS! I KNOW I SHOULDN'T AGREE TO THIS MAD SCHEME, BUT HEAVEN FORGIVE ME, I **MUST** HAVE THE MONEY TO CARRY ON MY WORK!



THEN, THE LONG ARDUOUS PERIOD OF TESTING BEGINS, UNTIL...

HE'S REACTING **PERFECTLY**! SEE HOW HIS **STRENGTH** HAS INCREASED! AND HIS COORDINATION IS ALREADY **SUPER-HUMAN**!

GOOD! GOOD! JUST SO LONG AS I'M SURE HE CAN BEAT THAT BLASTED **SPIDER-MAN**! THAT'S ALL I WANT!!



AND STILL THE INCREDIBLE EXPERIMENT CONTINUES...

ONE OF A TRUE SCORPION'S MOST POTENT WEAPONS IS HIS TAIL! AND OUR SYNTHETIC SCORPION SHALL HAVE A TAIL ALSO!

STILLWELL, IF THIS WORKS, I'LL MAKE YOU RICH... FAMOUS! I'LL BECOME YOUR PATRON!

... FOR, THE WORLD MUST BE RID OF SPIDER-MAN! AND AT LAST WE'VE BEEN GIVEN THE TOOLS TO DO THE JOB!

I FEEL LIKE A LIVING DYNAMO! I'VE BECOME ALL MUSCLE! I CAN LICK ANYBODY!

THE EXPERIMENT IS OVER! THERE'S NOTHING MORE I CAN DO!

GOOD! NOW LET'S PUT HIM IN A COSTUME! I HAVE THE PERFECT DESIGN IN MIND! I WANT SPIDER-MAN DEFEATED BY SOMEONE JUST LIKE HIM... IT WILL BE POETIC JUSTICE!

AND SO...

NOTICE HOW HE CAN MANIPULATE HIS TAIL AUTOMATICALLY! HIS INVOLUNTARY NERVE IMPULSES, ACTIVATED BY MENTAL COMMANDS, SERVE TO...

LOOK, SPARE ME THE EXPLANATIONS, STILLWELL! JUST SO LONG AS HE SMASHES SPIDER-MAN!

GIVE ME SOMETHING TO TEST MY STRENGTH ON! I'VE GOTTA SEE IF I'M AS POWERFUL AS I FEEL!

THERE! SATISFIED?

A GRANITE BLOCK! AND I CAN PULL IT APART WITH MY BARE HANDS! DOC, YOU'RE A GENIUS!

WAIT! LOOK OUT! WHAT ARE YOU DOING??

HUH? WHAT...? HEY...HOW DID THAT HAPPEN??

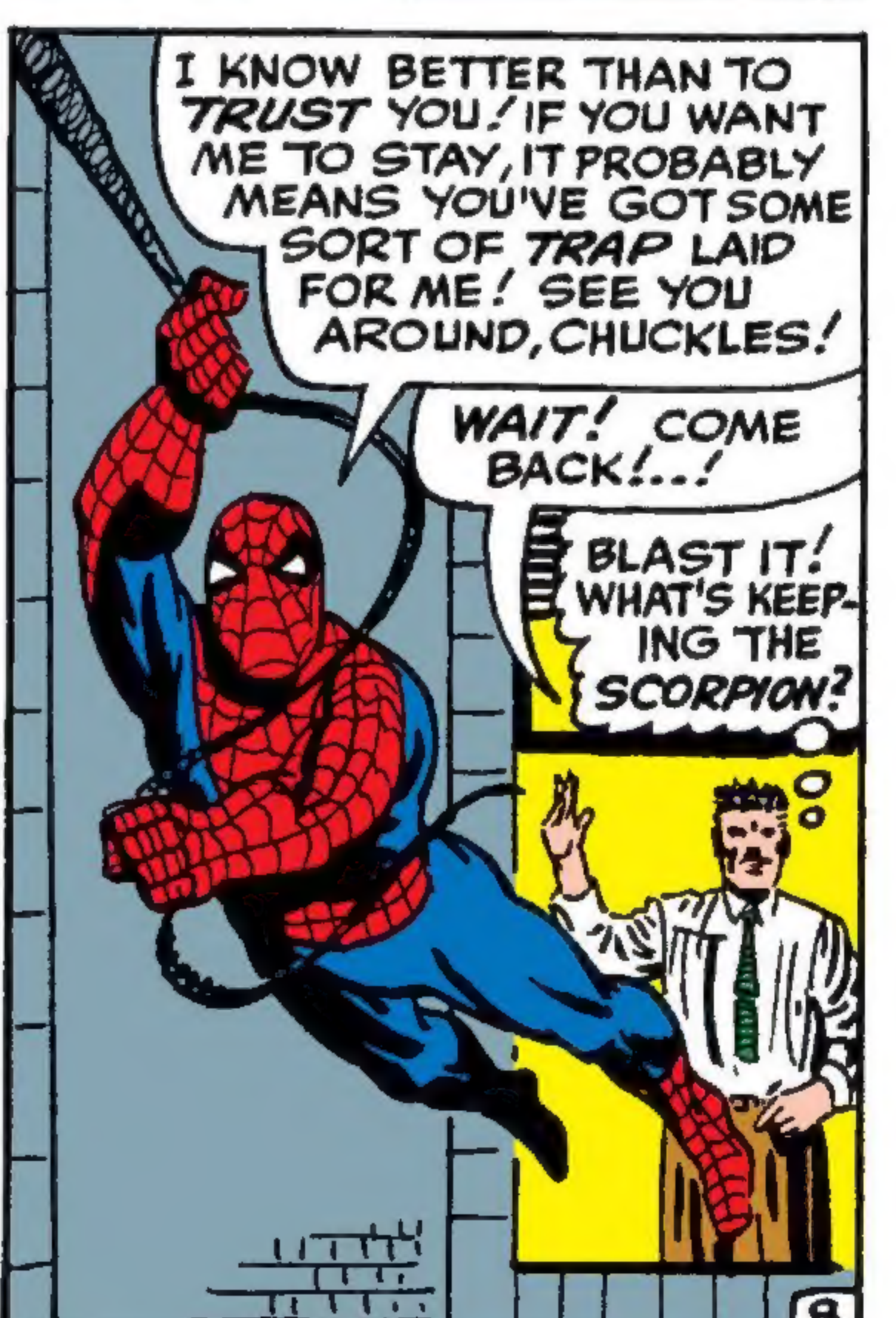
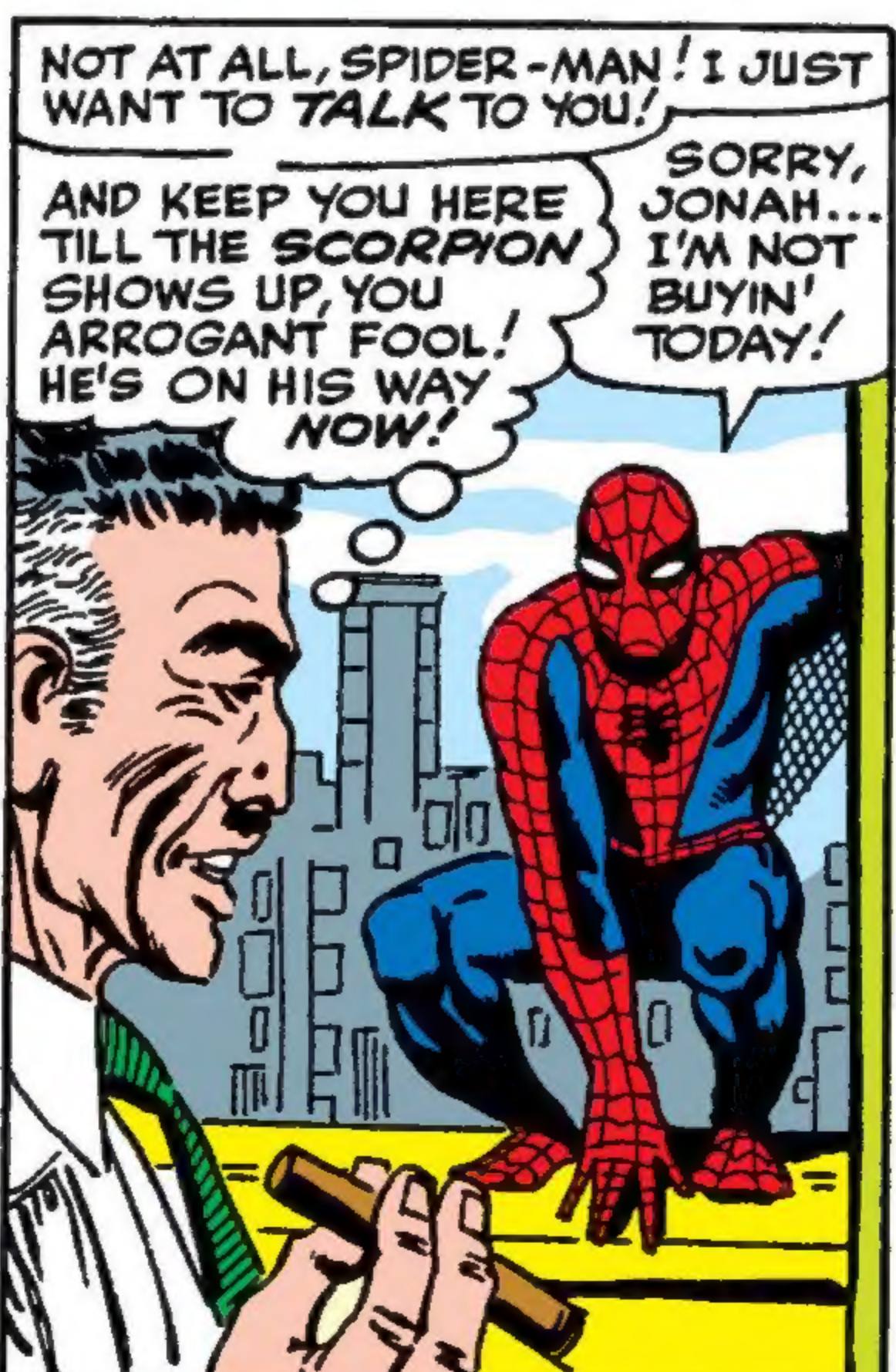
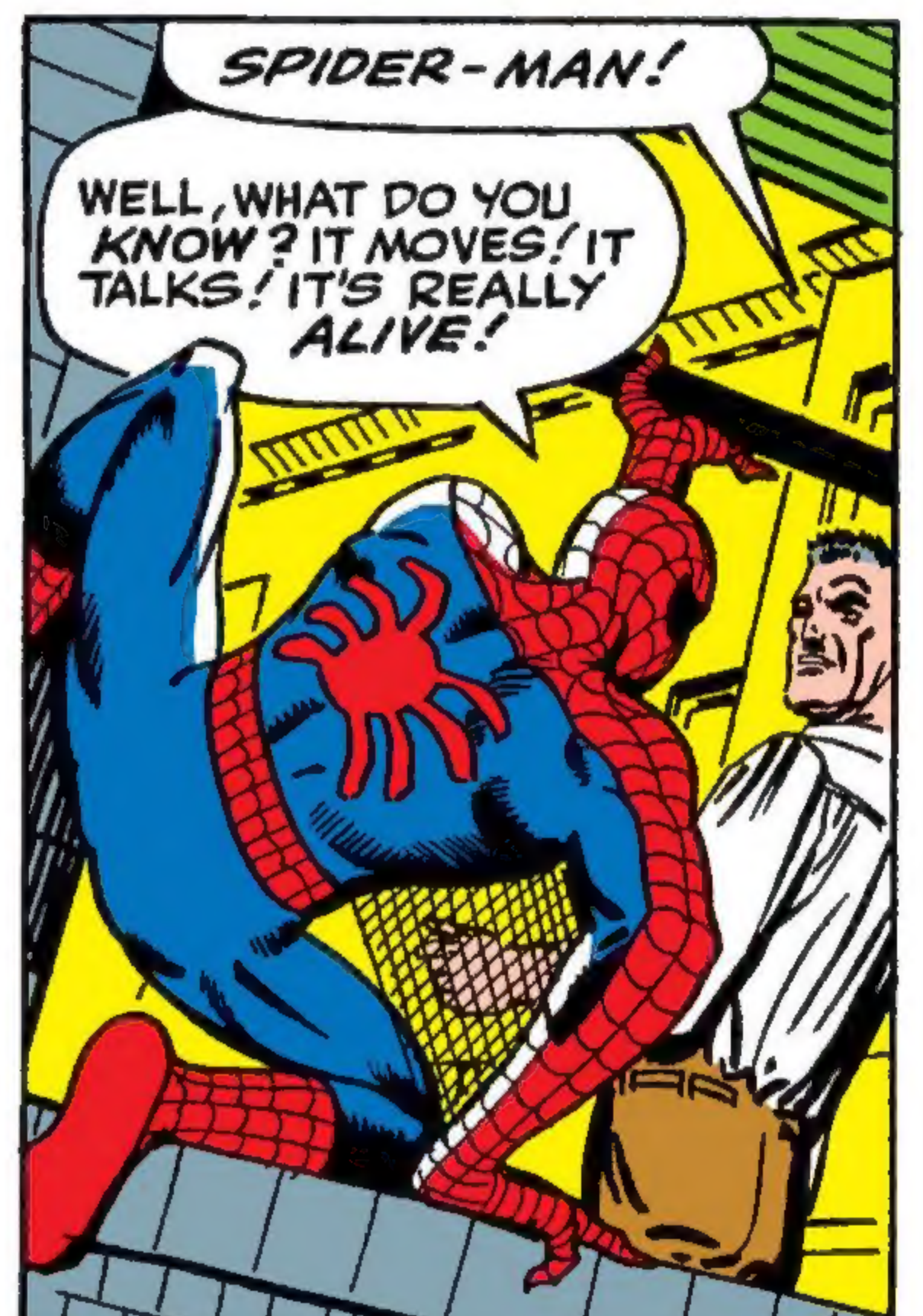
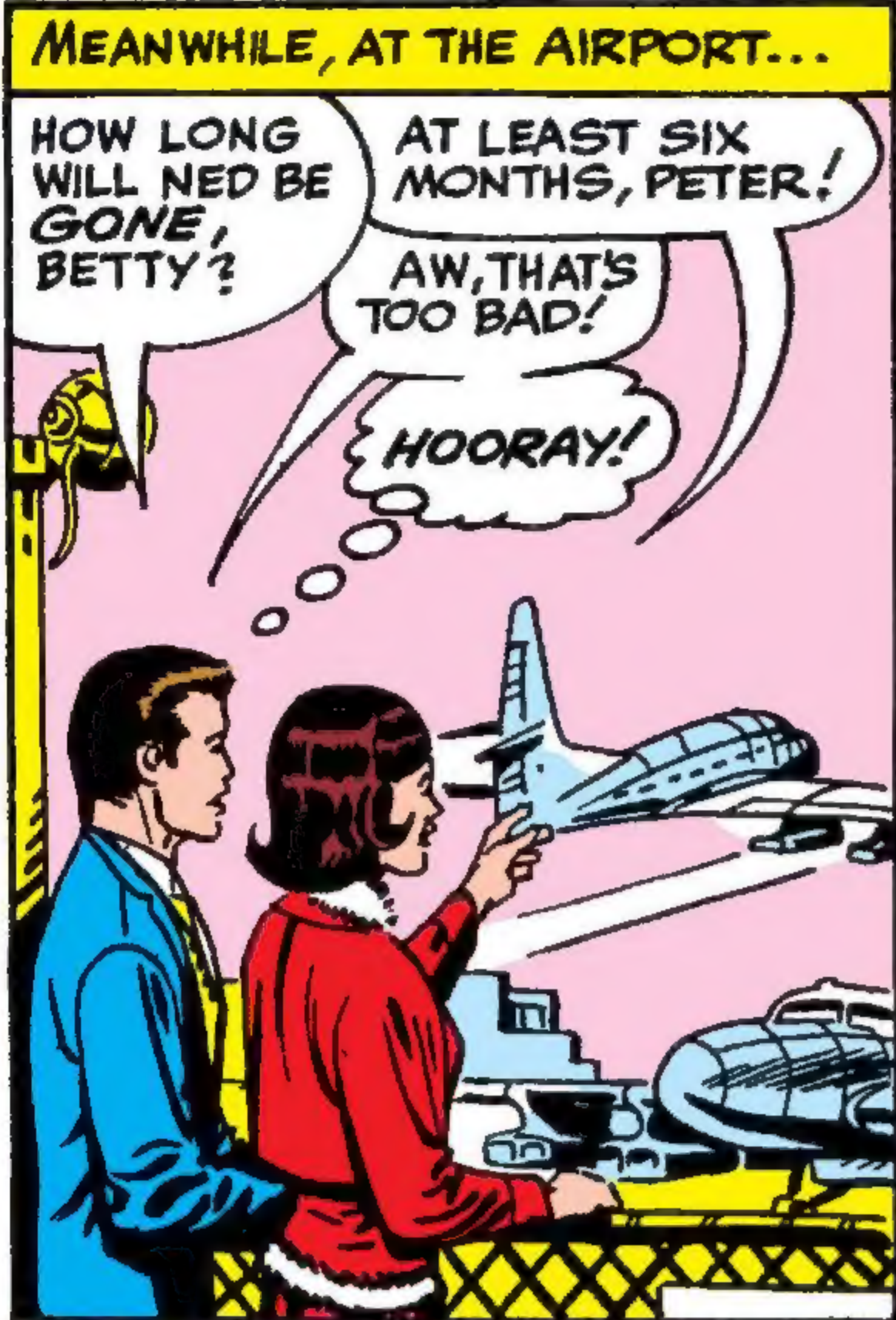
IT'S YOUR TAIL! YOU'VE FORGOTTEN IT'S ATTACHED TO YOUR BACK! YOU HAVEN'T FULLY LEARNED TO CONTROL IT YET!

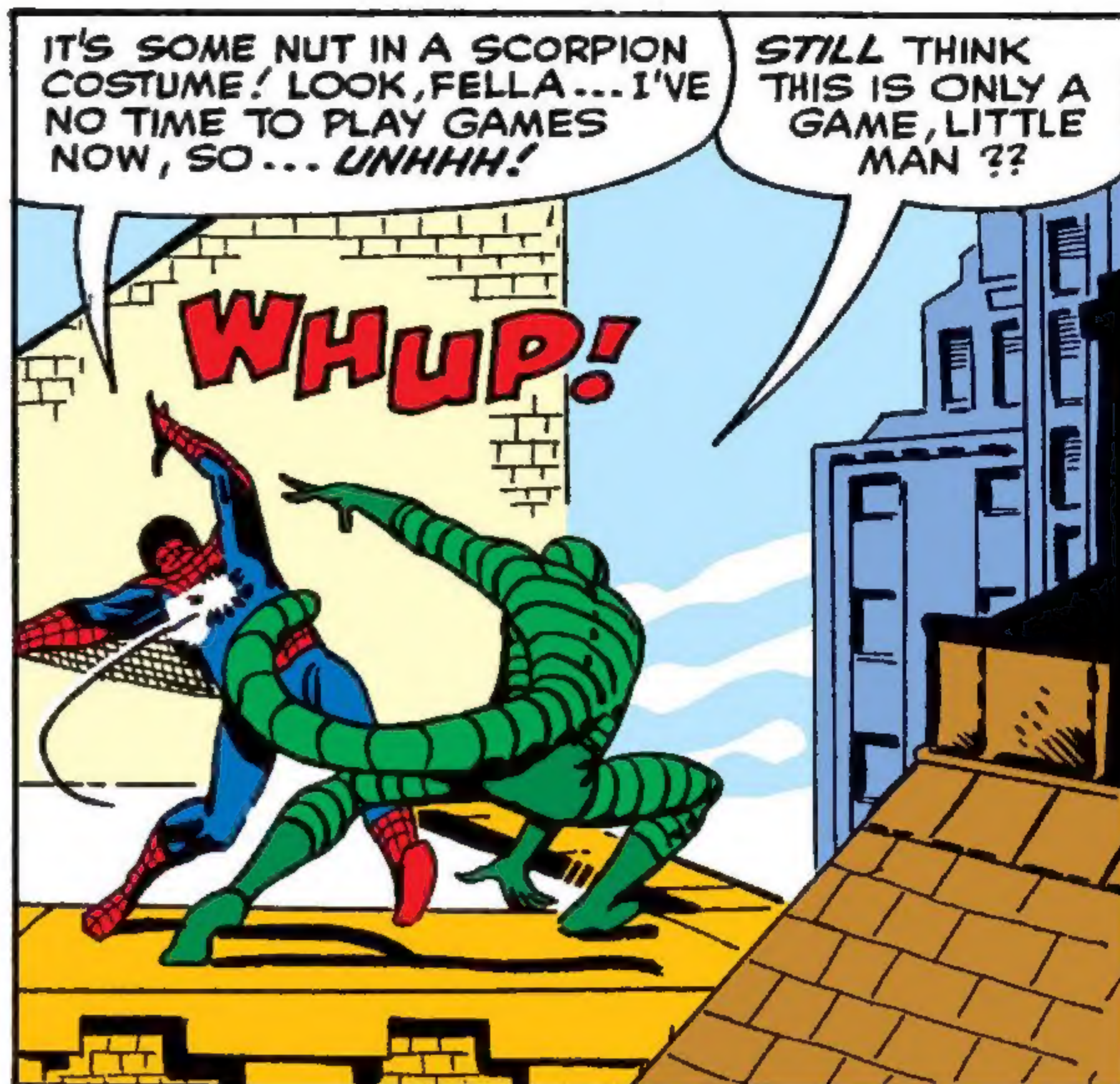
IT'S LIKE A SLEDGE-HAMMER! SPIDER-MAN WON'T STAND A CHANCE!

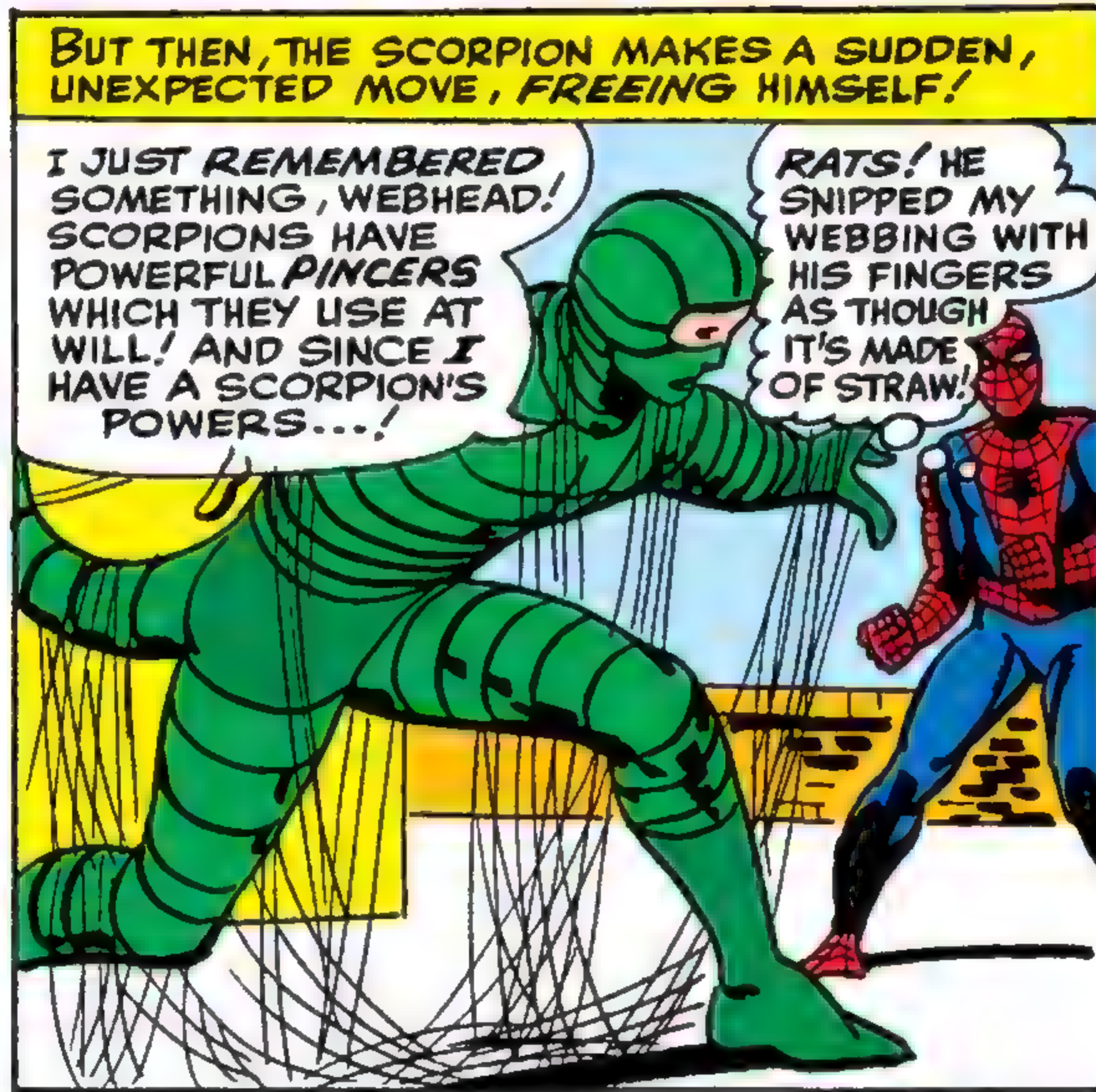
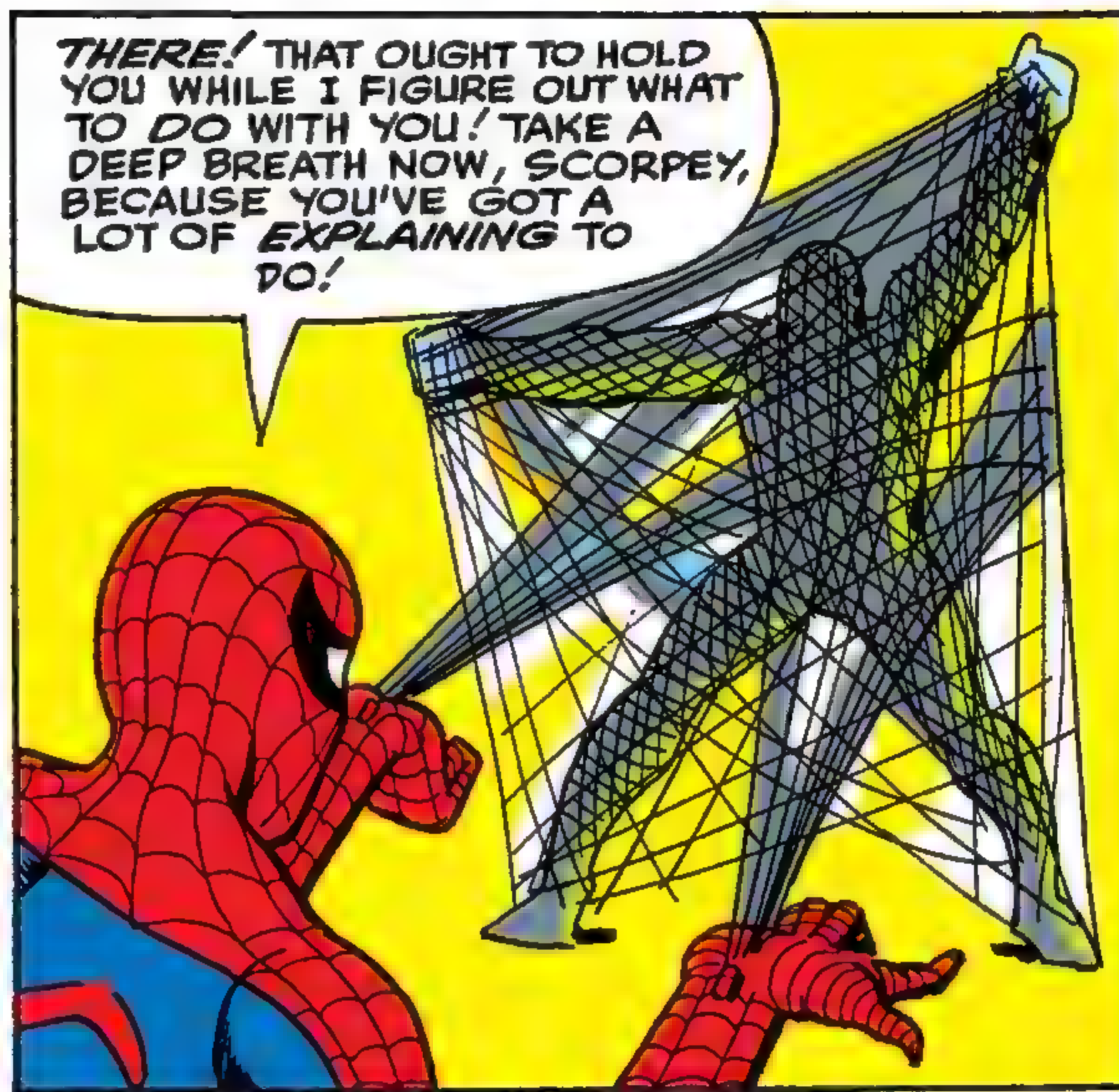
YOU'LL HAVE TO SPEND SOME TIME PRACTICING... LEARNING TO COORDINATE YOUR MOVEMENTS... TO FAMILIARIZE YOURSELF WITH YOUR NEW POWERS!

AW, WHY WASTE TIME? I FEEL LIKE I COULD LICK AN ARMY RIGHT NOW!

DO AS DR. STILLWELL SAYS, GARGAN! REMEMBER, I'M STILL THE ONE PAYING YOU! REPORT TO ME FOR INSTRUCTIONS WHEN HE SAYS YOU'RE READY!







MEANWHILE, STILL WORKING IN HIS LAB, DR. FARLEY STILLWELL HAS SOME VERY SERIOUS MISGIVINGS...

ACCORDING TO THESE NEW TESTS, THE SCORPION WILL BE EVEN MORE POWERFUL THAN I THOUGHT!

AND THE MORE HIS STRENGTH INCREASES, THE MORE HIS EVIL NATURE WILL TAKE OVER!

I MUST HAVE BEEN MAD TO DO WHAT I DID! MONEY ISN'T THAT IMPORTANT! I MAY HAVE UNLEASHED ONE OF THE WORST DANGERS OF ALL TIME UPON MANKIND!

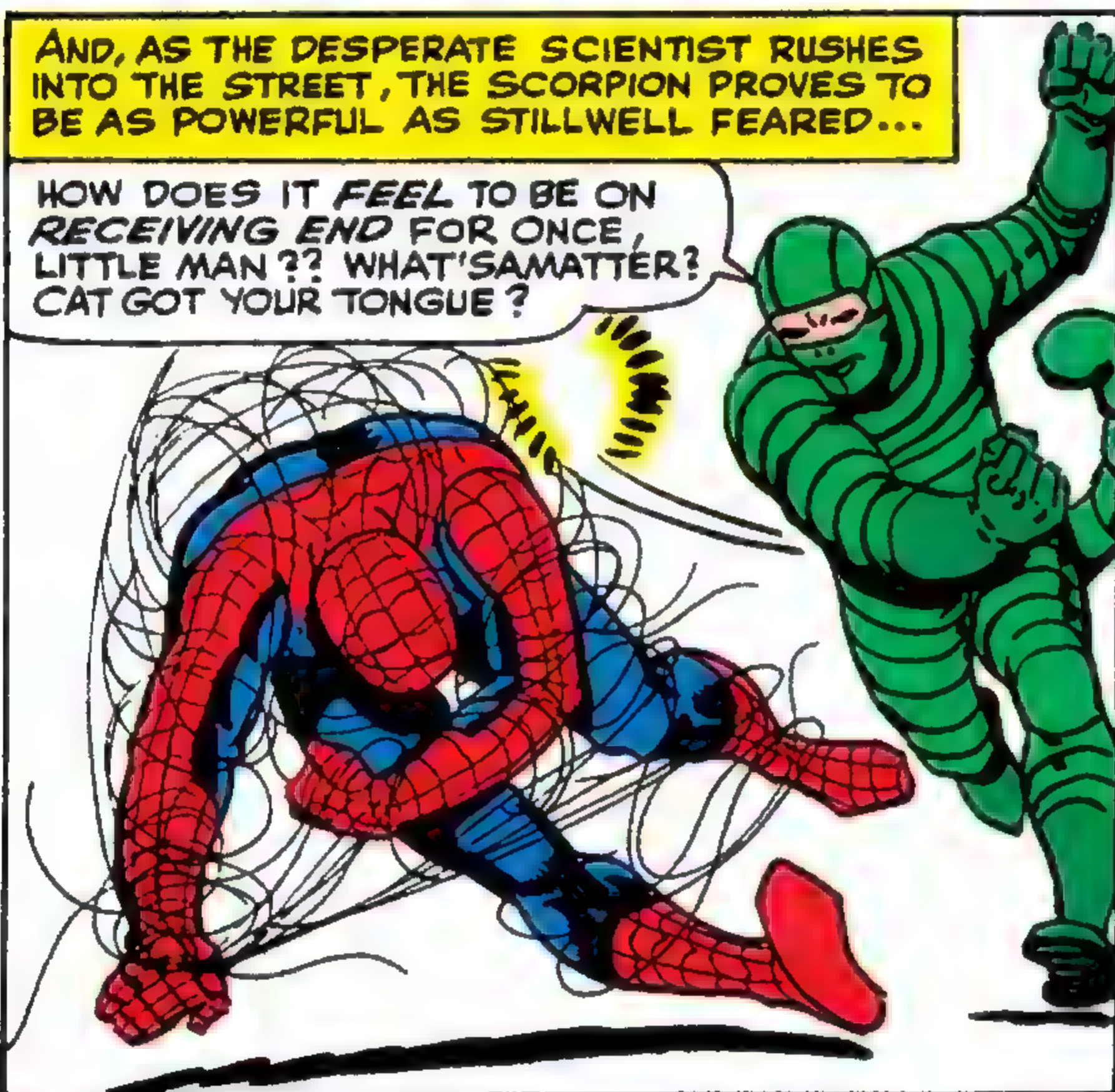
BUT THERE'S STILL A CHANCE TO MAKE AMENDS... IF I MOVE FAST ENOUGH!

IF I CAN GET THIS SERUM TO HIM IN TIME, IT WILL SERVE AS AN ANTIDOTE! HE'LL LOSE HIS DEADLY POWERS BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE!



AND, AS THE DESPERATE SCIENTIST RUSHES INTO THE STREET, THE SCORPION PROVES TO BE AS POWERFUL AS STILLWELL FEARED...

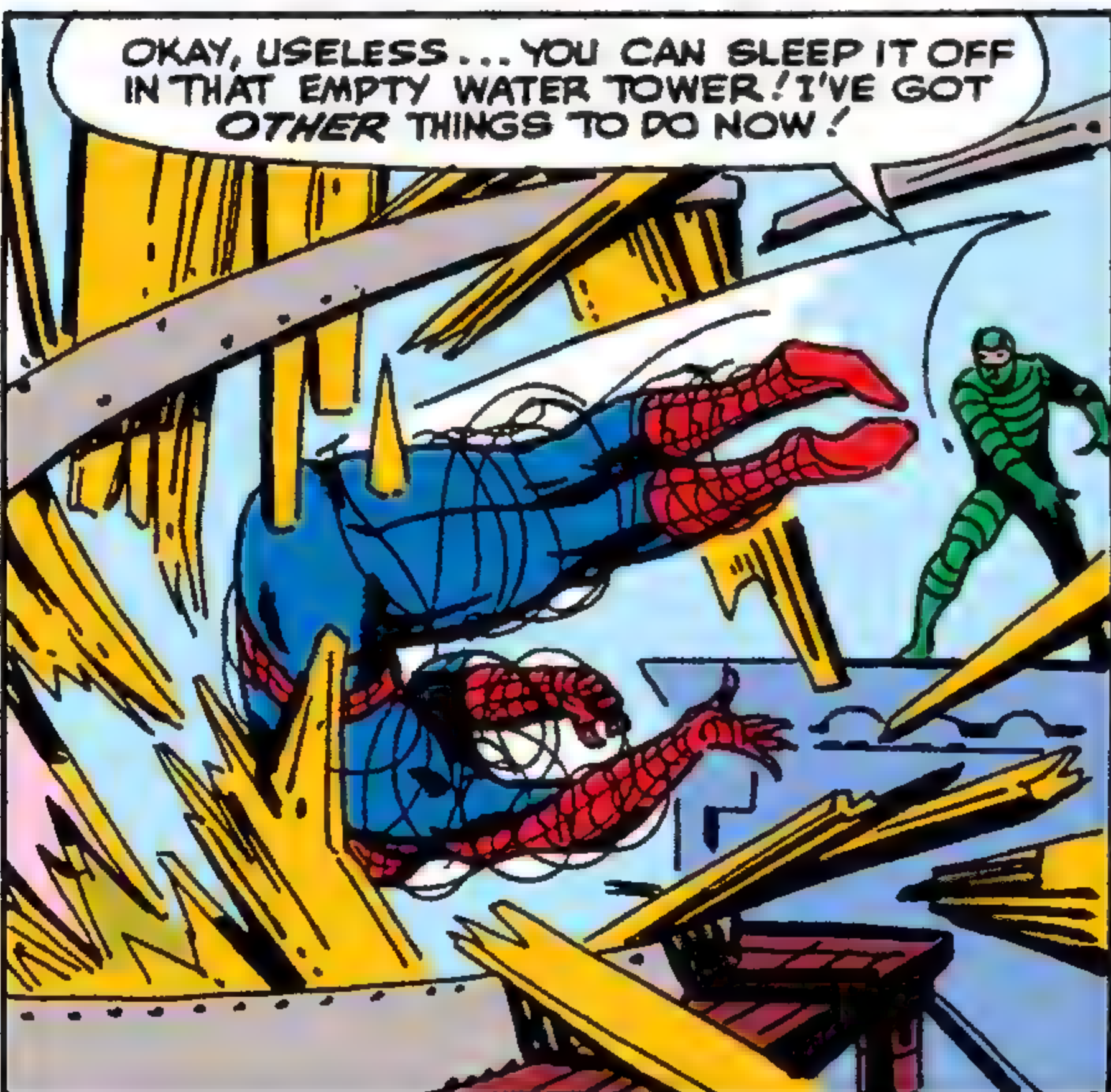
HOW DOES IT FEEL TO BE ON RECEIVING END FOR ONCE, LITTLE MAN ?? WHAT'S A MATTER? CAT GOT YOUR TONGUE?



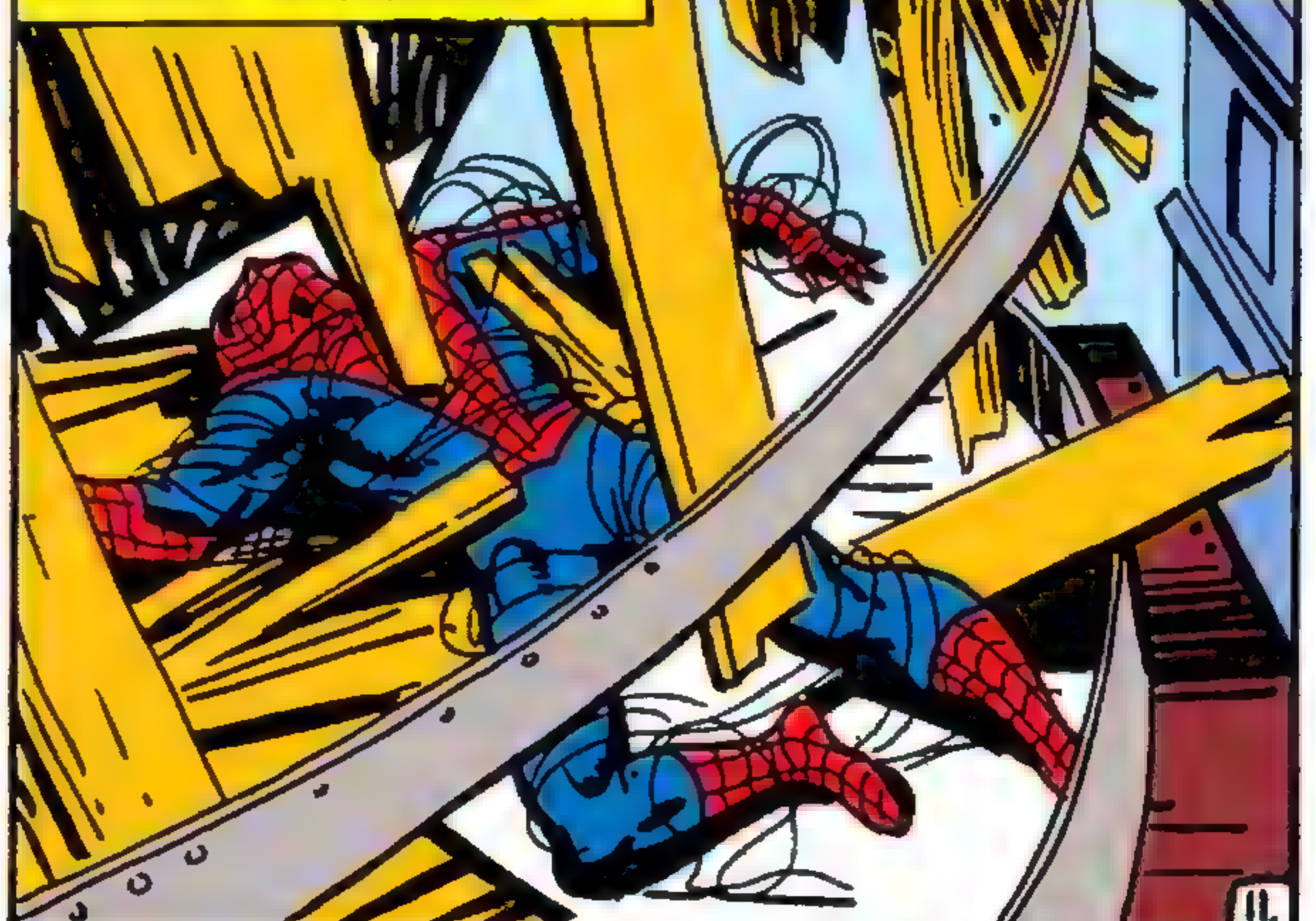
HOW ABOUT THAT? I KNOCKED HIM OUT!! THIS IS THE EASIEST TEN GRAND ANYONE'S EVER MADE!



OKAY, USELESS... YOU CAN SLEEP IT OFF IN THAT EMPTY WATER TOWER! I'VE GOT OTHER THINGS TO DO NOW!



THUS SPIDER-MAN SUFFERS ONE OF HIS GREATEST DEFEATS, AS HE LIES MOTIONLESS ATOP THE ROOF, HIS MIGHTY MUSCLES STILLED... HIS POTENT SPIDER POWER TEMPORARILY DORMANT... ONLY THE BEATING OF HIS VALIANT HEART TESTIFYING TO THE LIFE WHICH REMAINS... TO THE AWESOME ENERGY WHICH IS SLOWLY RETURNING...



WHILE, A SCANT FEW YARDS AWAY, HIS TRIUMPHANT FOE CHORTLES WITH GHOULISH GLEE ...!

I'VE WON! I'VE BEATEN SPIDER-MAN! HE NEVER HAD A CHANCE!



AND, IF I CAN BEAT HIM SO EASY, THEN **NOBODY** CAN STOP ME! THE WHOLE CITY IS MINE, FOR THE TAKING!



SUDDENLY, JONAH JAMESON'S VOICE RINGS OUT FROM A WINDOW BELOW ...

SCORPION! WHERE'S SPIDER-MAN? BRING HIM TO ME SO I CAN UNMASK HIM!

GET HIM YOURSELF! I'M THROUGH TAKING ORDERS FROM YOU, MISTER! **NOBODY** TELLS THE SCORPION WHAT TO DO!



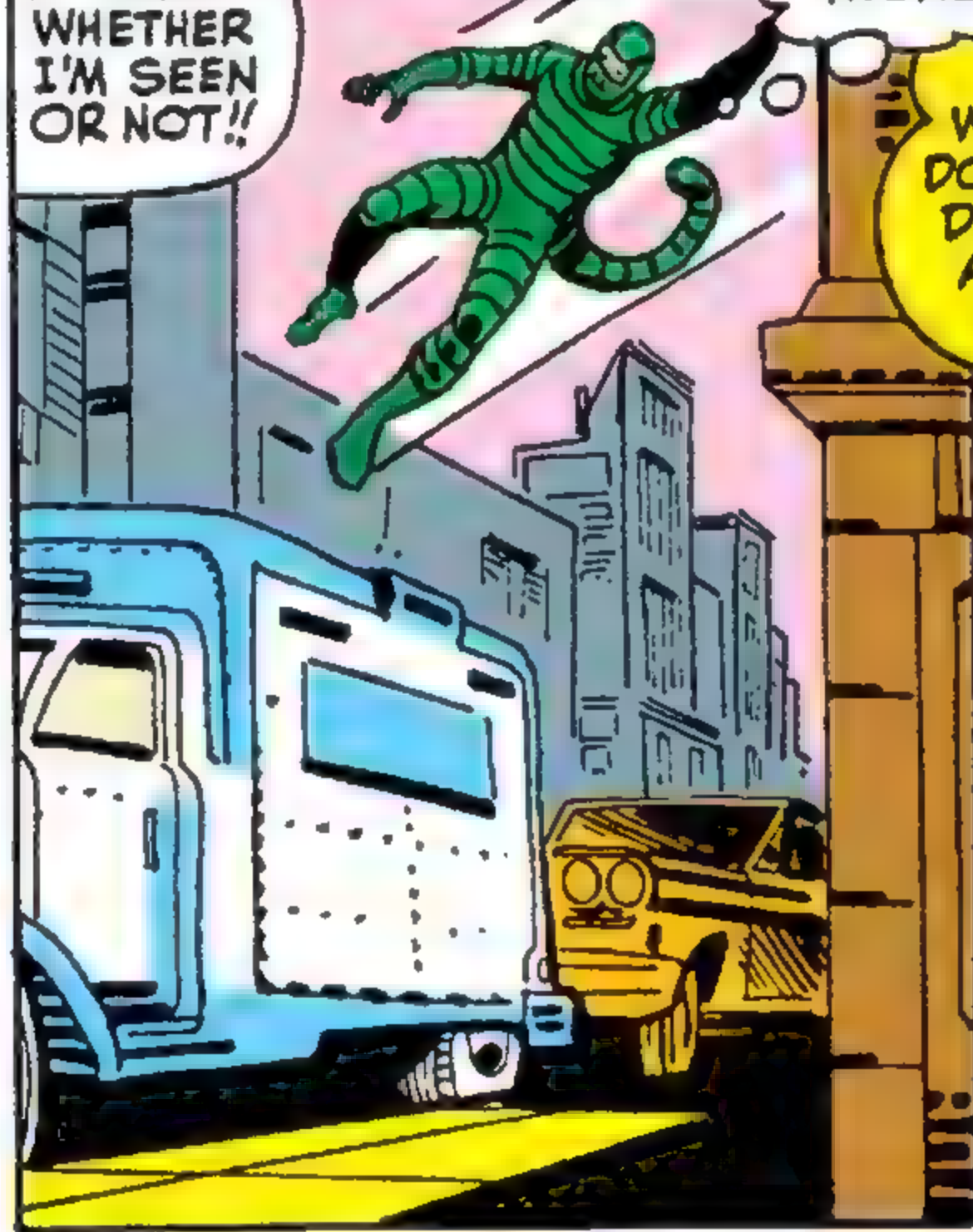
OH, NO! I NEVER EXPECTED THAT! IF THE SCORPION TURNS AGAINST ME, THEN I'VE GONE FROM THE FRYING PAN INTO THE FIRE!



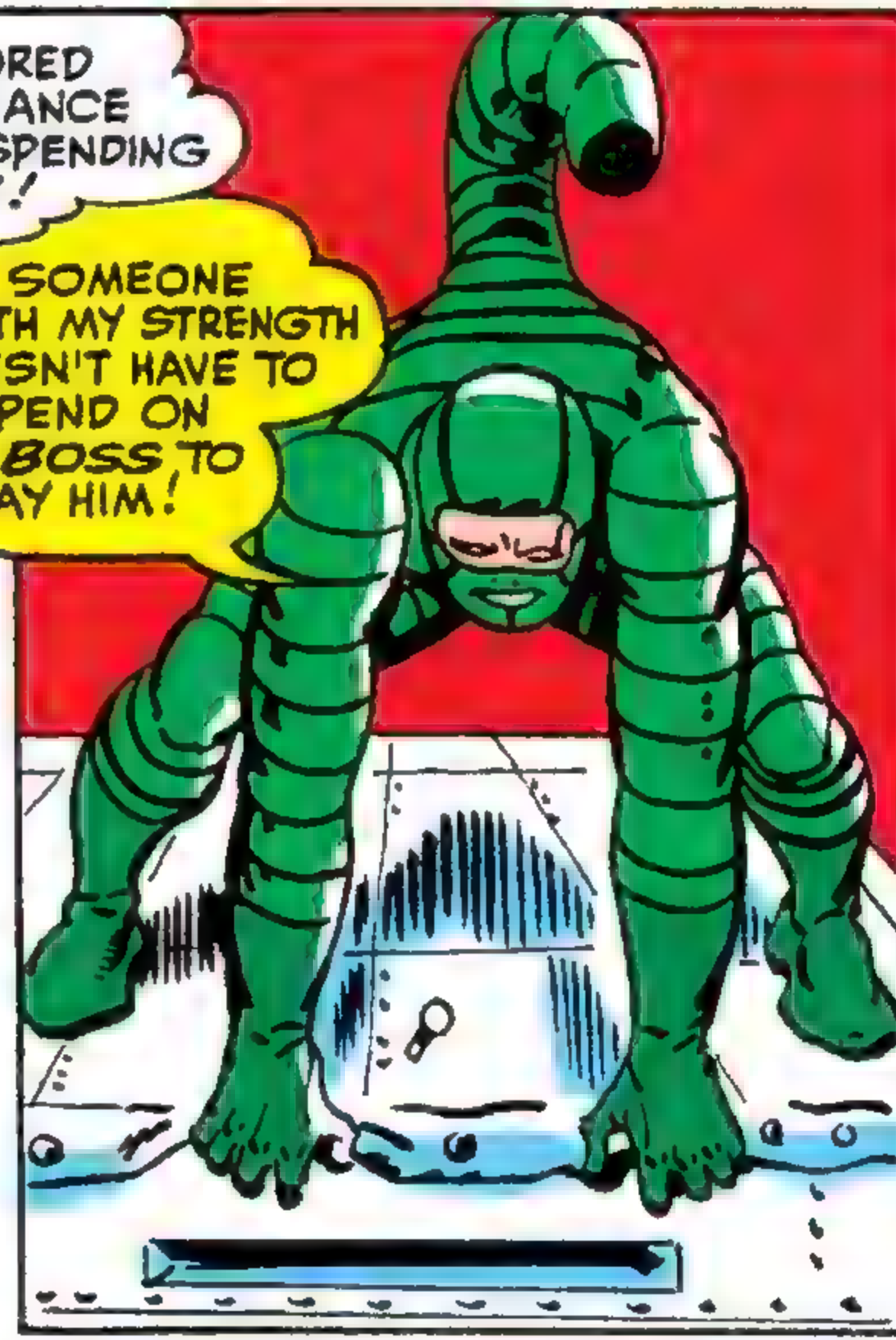
WAIT! COME BACK! SOMEONE MIGHT SEE YOU! STOP!!

THE FOOL! AS IF I CARE WHETHER I'M SEEN OR NOT!!

WELL, WELL! AN ARMORED CAR! HERE'S MY CHANCE TO GET A LITTLE SPENDING MONEY!



SOMEONE WITH MY STRENGTH DOESN'T HAVE TO DEPEND ON A BOSS TO PAY HIM!



WITH HIS INCREDIBLY POWERFUL Pincer-like Fingers, THE SCORPION PEELS THE UPPER STEEL PLATE FROM THE ROOF OF THE CAR AS THOUGH IT'S MADE OF CARDBOARD! BUT THEN ...

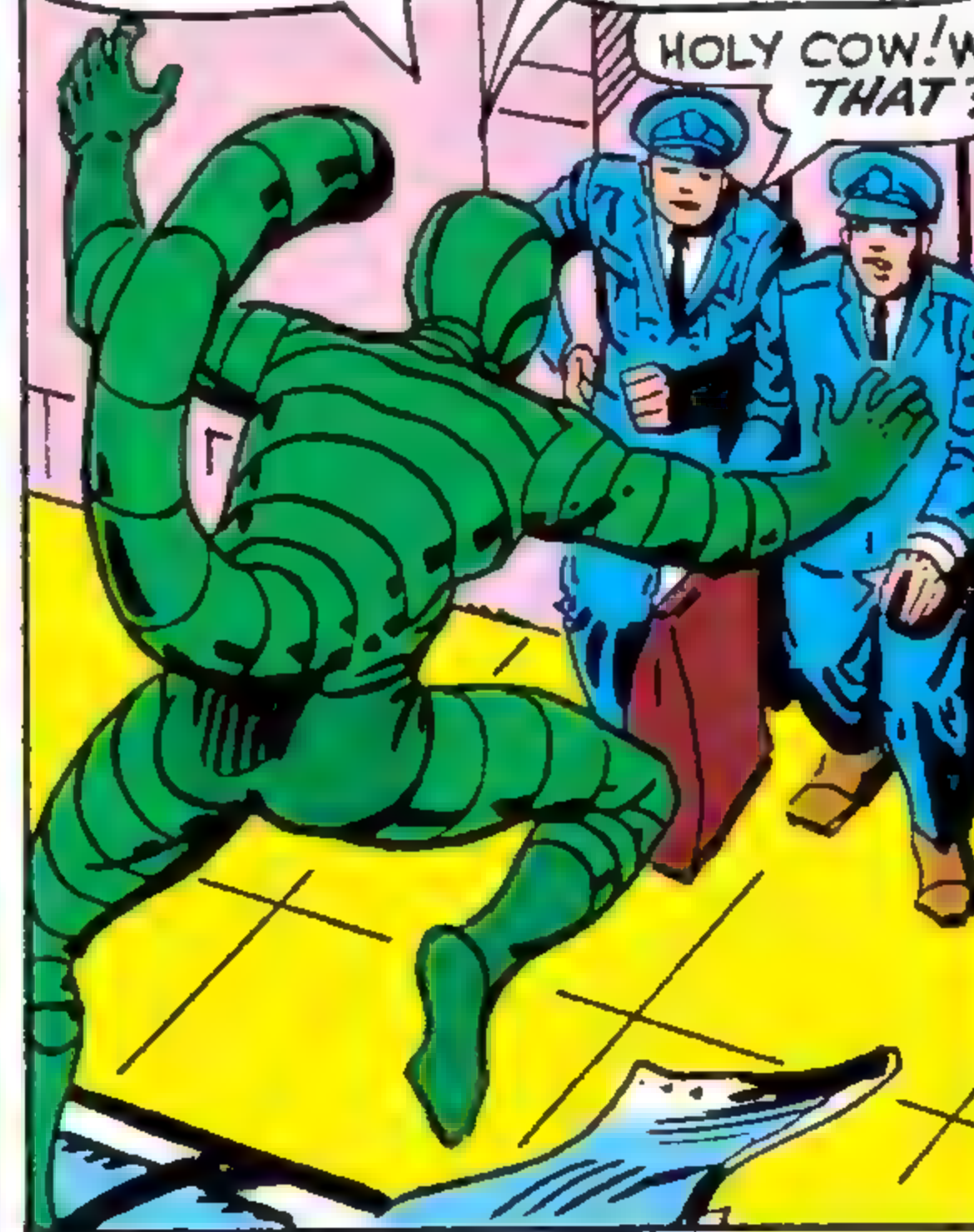


EMPTY! THERE'S NOTHING INSIDE!

NO WONDER! THEY'RE BRINGING SOMETHING NOW!

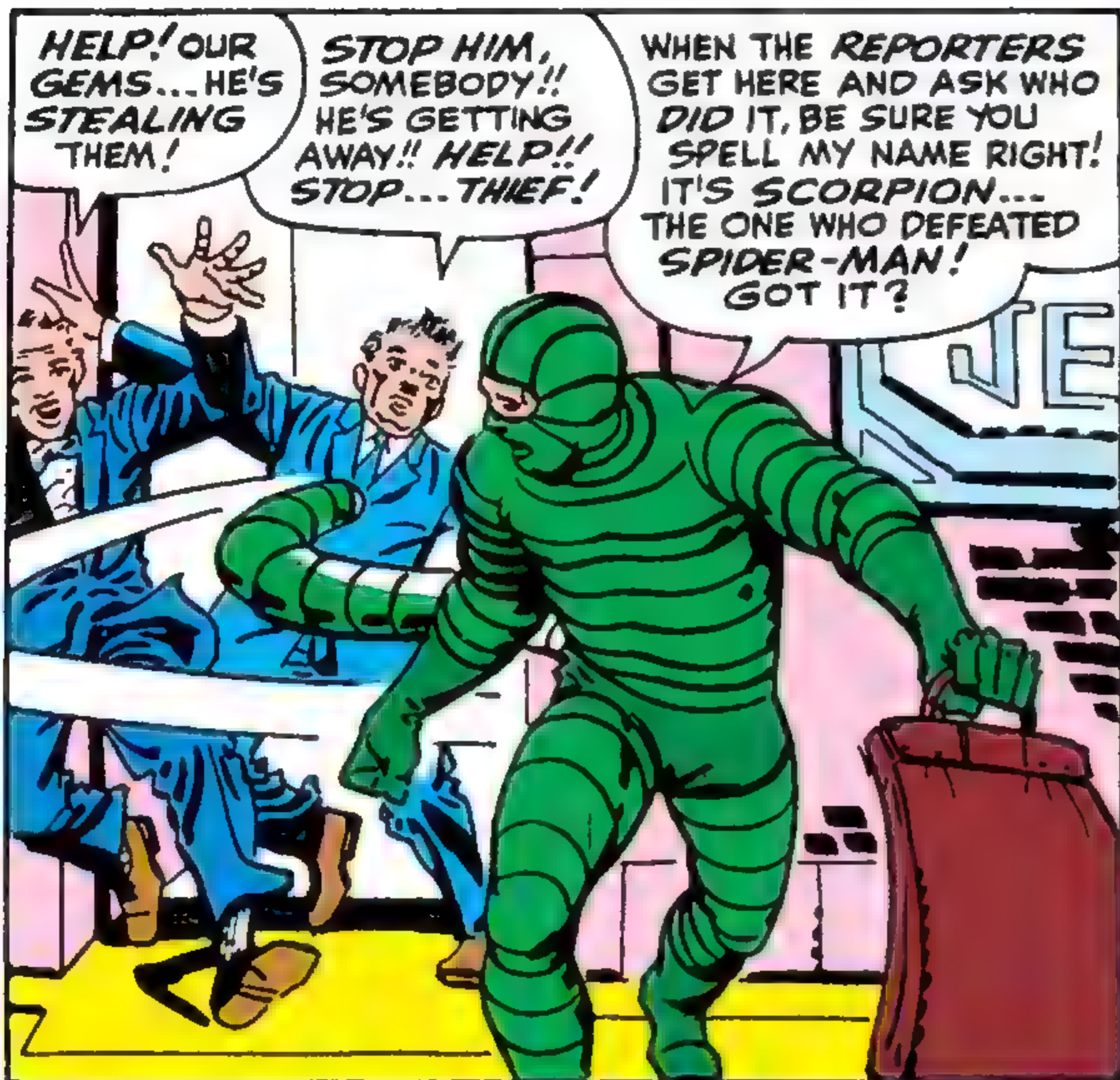
WELCOME, BOYS! I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU!

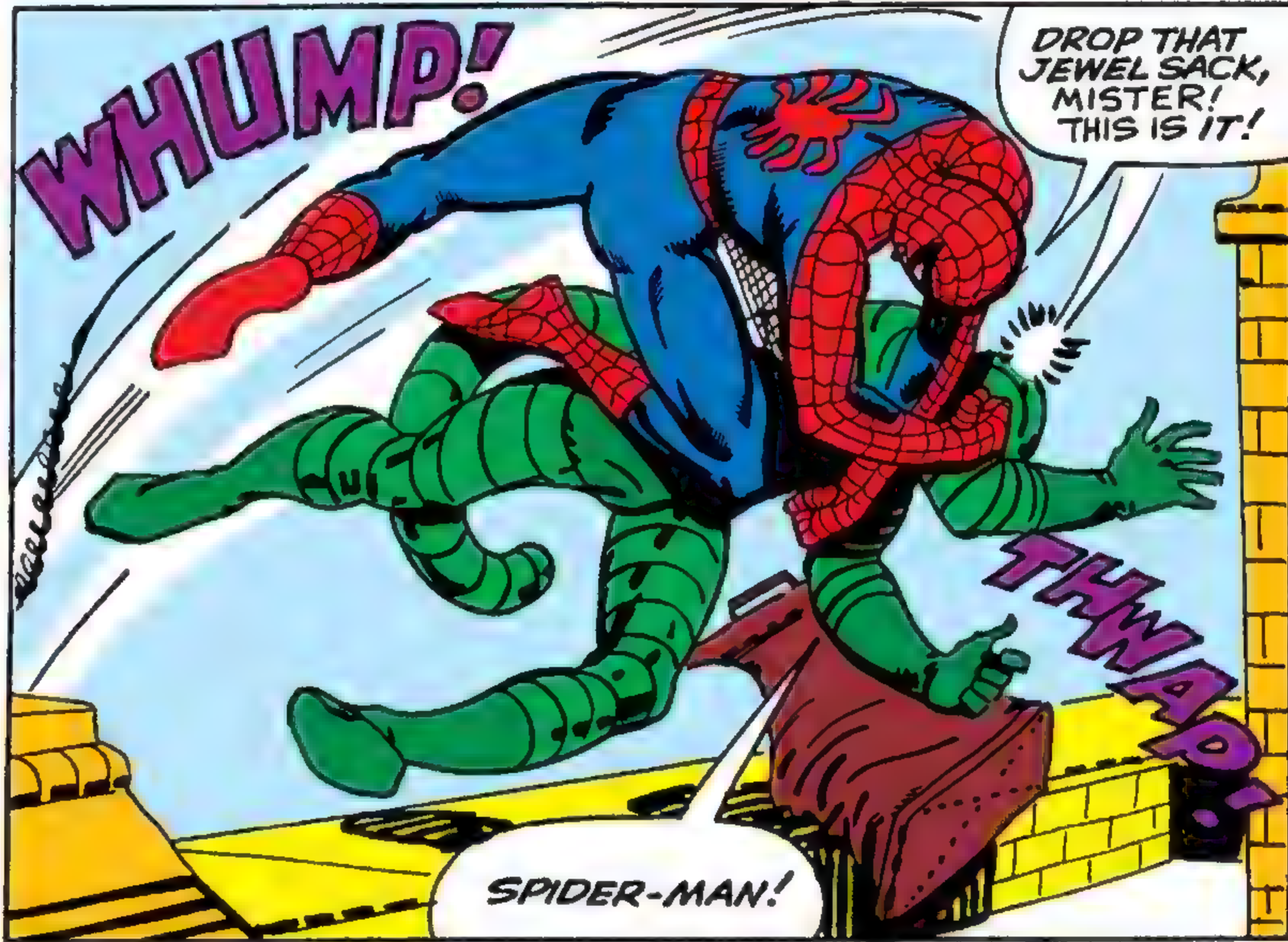
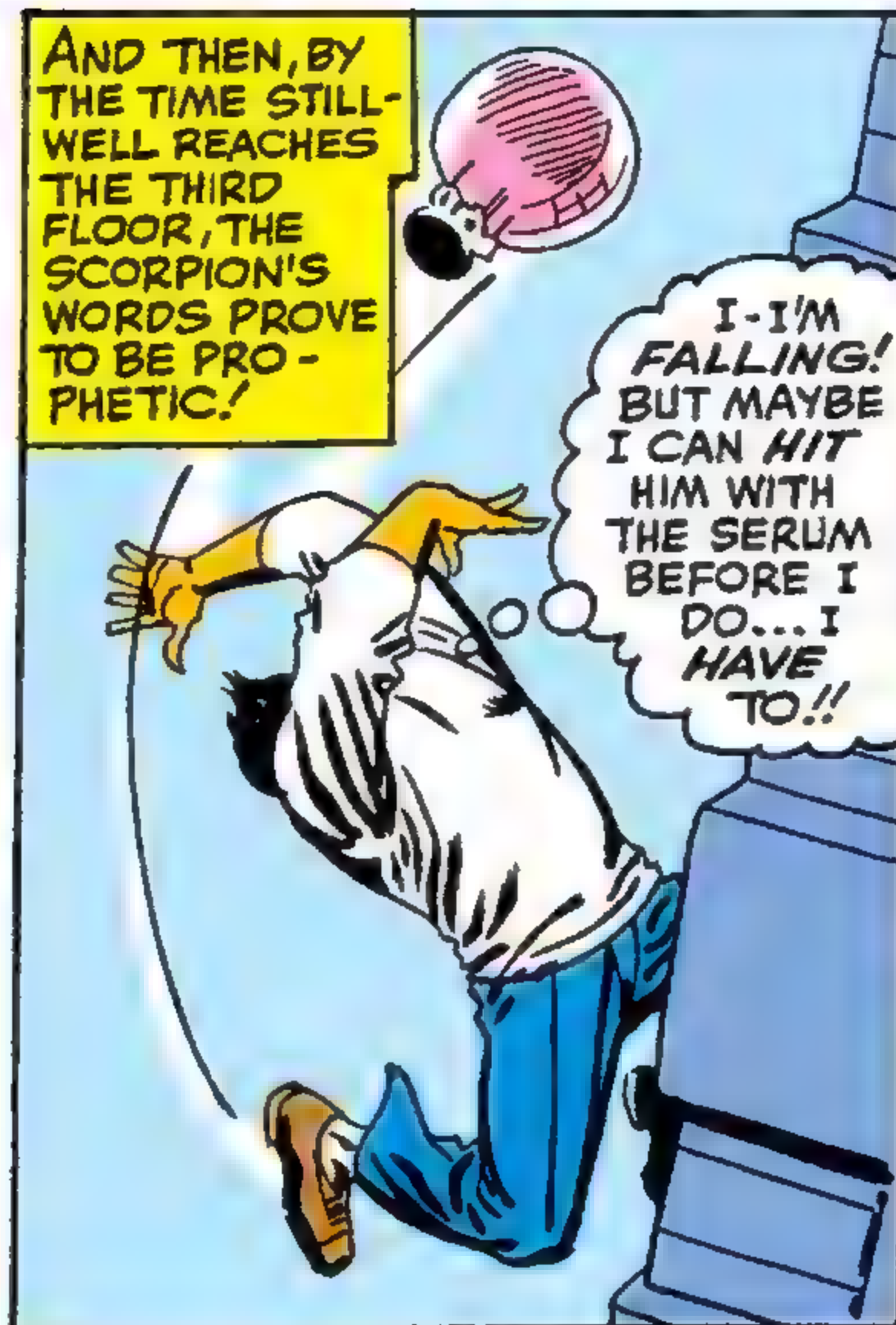
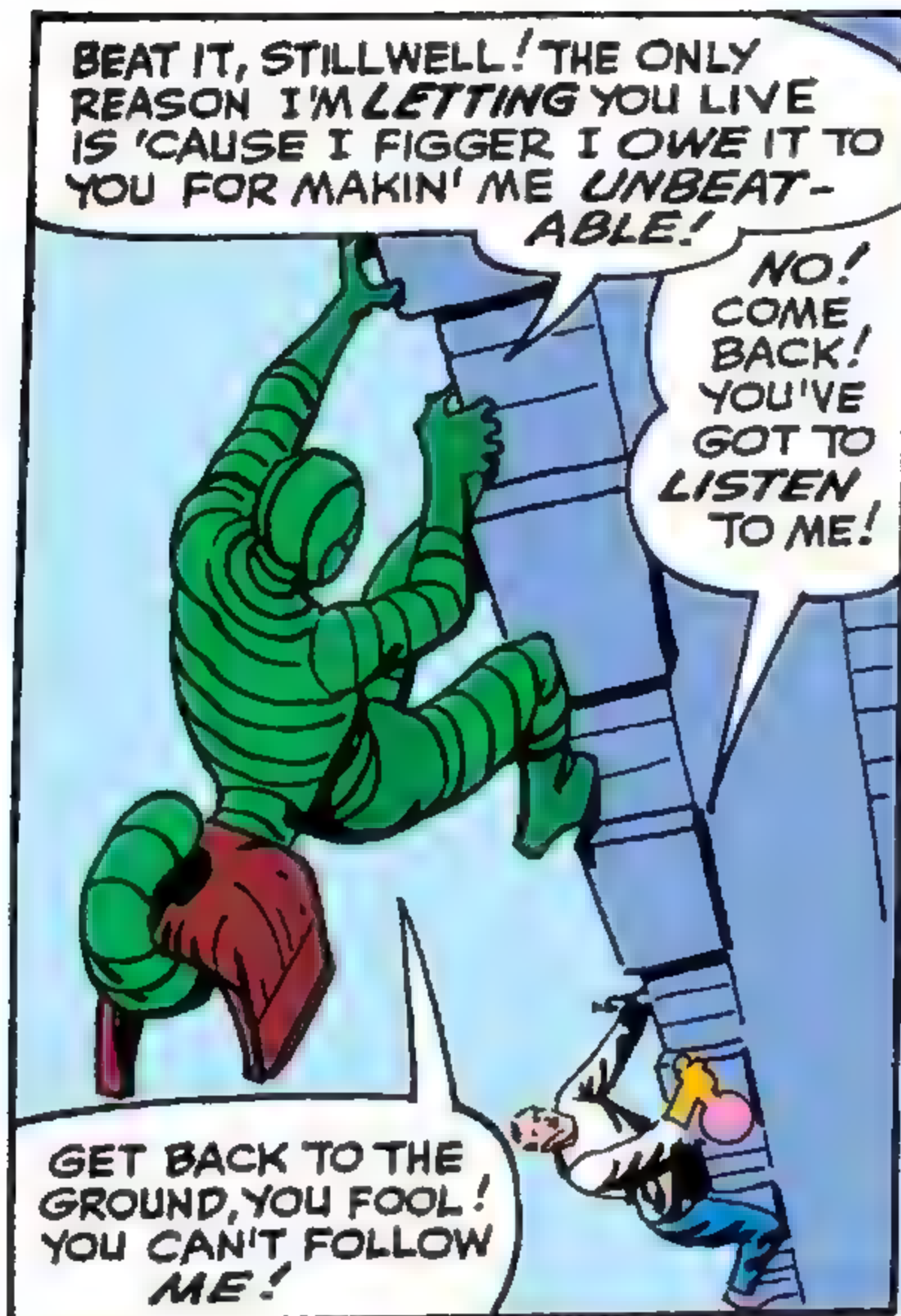
HOLY COW! WHAT'S THAT?



IT'S THE SCORPION, YOU FOOL! BE SURE YOU REMEMBER THE NAME ... WHEN YOU WAKE UP!







AND, EVEN AS THE BATTLE PROGRESSES, THE SCORPION SEEMS TO GROW MORE POWERFUL, MORE DANGEROUS, WITH EACH PASSING SECOND...



THIS IS *ONE* FIGHT YOU WON'T WALK AWAY FROM, PUNK!

FOR HE HAS ALREADY PASSED "THE POINT OF NO RETURN"! EVEN THE ANTIDOTE SERUM WOULD NOT HELP HIM NOW! HE IS TRULY... THE SCORPION!



HIS BODY HAS ATTAINED THE MAXIMUM DEGREE OF SUPER POWER! HIS BRAIN HAS BEEN SUBTLY ALTERED UNTIL ITS STANDARDS ARE THOSE OF THE PREDATORY BEAST! HE HAS BECOME THE EMBODIMENT OF ALL THAT IS EVIL!!



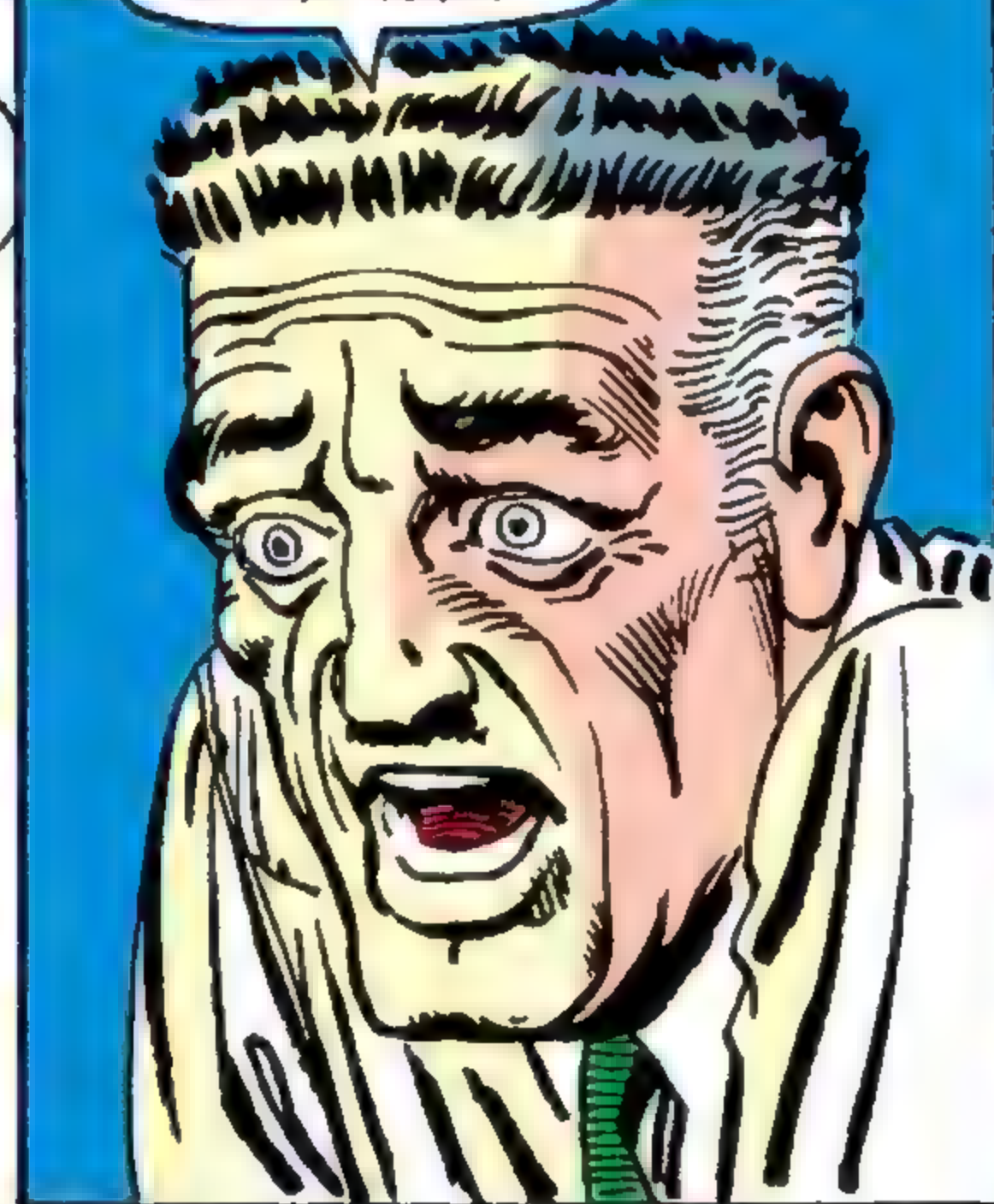
MEANWHILE, THE SCHEMING PUBLISHER OF THE *DAILY BUGLE* GROWS MORE PANICKY WITH EACH NEW BULLETIN HE RECEIVES...



WHAT?? STILLWELL IS DEAD?? AND THE SCORPION HAS ROBBED CARTER'S JEWELRY STORE??!

A POLICE DRAGNET IS COMBING THE CITY?? PEOPLE ARE LOCKING THEMSELVES INDOORS??!

NOBODY KNOWS IT, BUT IT'S ALL MY FAULT! I'M THE ONE TO BLAME! IF NOT FOR ME, THERE WOULD BE NO SCORPION!



JUST TO SATISFY MY OWN PERSONAL HATRED, I TRIED TO DESTROY SPIDER-MAN!

AND, IN SO DOING, I'VE UNLEASHED A FAR WORSE MENACE UPON THE WORLD! A MENACE I CAN NO LONGER CONTROL! A MENACE WHICH NO ONE CAN CONTROL!



AND EVEN AS JAMESON REMAINS LOCKED IN HIS OFFICE, A PRISONER OF HIS OWN CONSCIENCE, HIS OWN GUILT... THE EPIC BATTLE CONTINUES...



YOU'VE HAD MORE EXPERIENCE! YOU MIGHT EVEN BE MORE SKILLFUL! BUT *POWER* IS ALL THAT REALLY MATTERS!

AND *POWER* IS WHAT I'VE GOT!

HE'S RIGHT! I WAS A FOOL TO TRY TO TRADE BLOWS WITH HIM! HE IS STRONGER! I'VE GOT TO CHANGE MY STRATEGY!

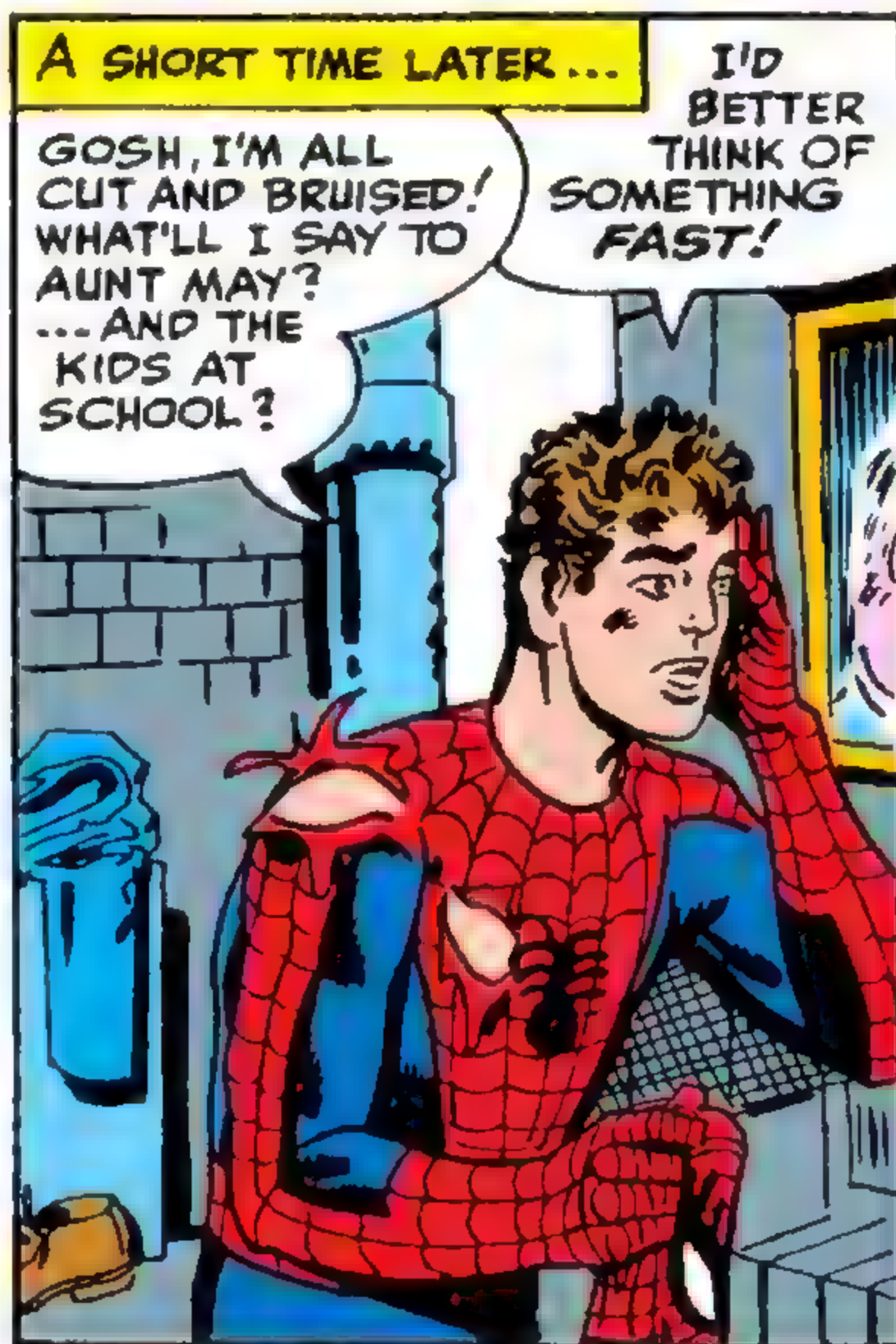


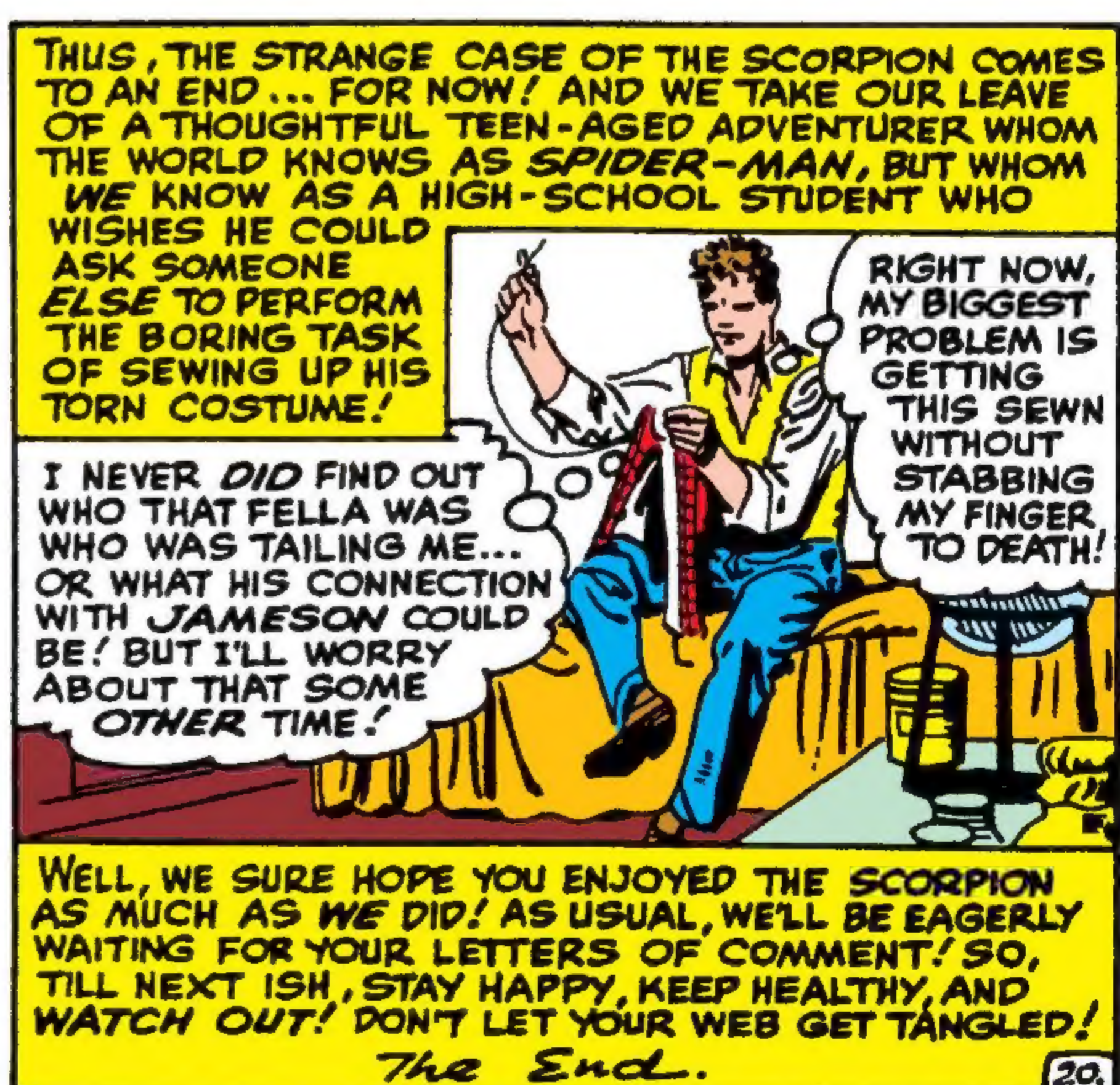
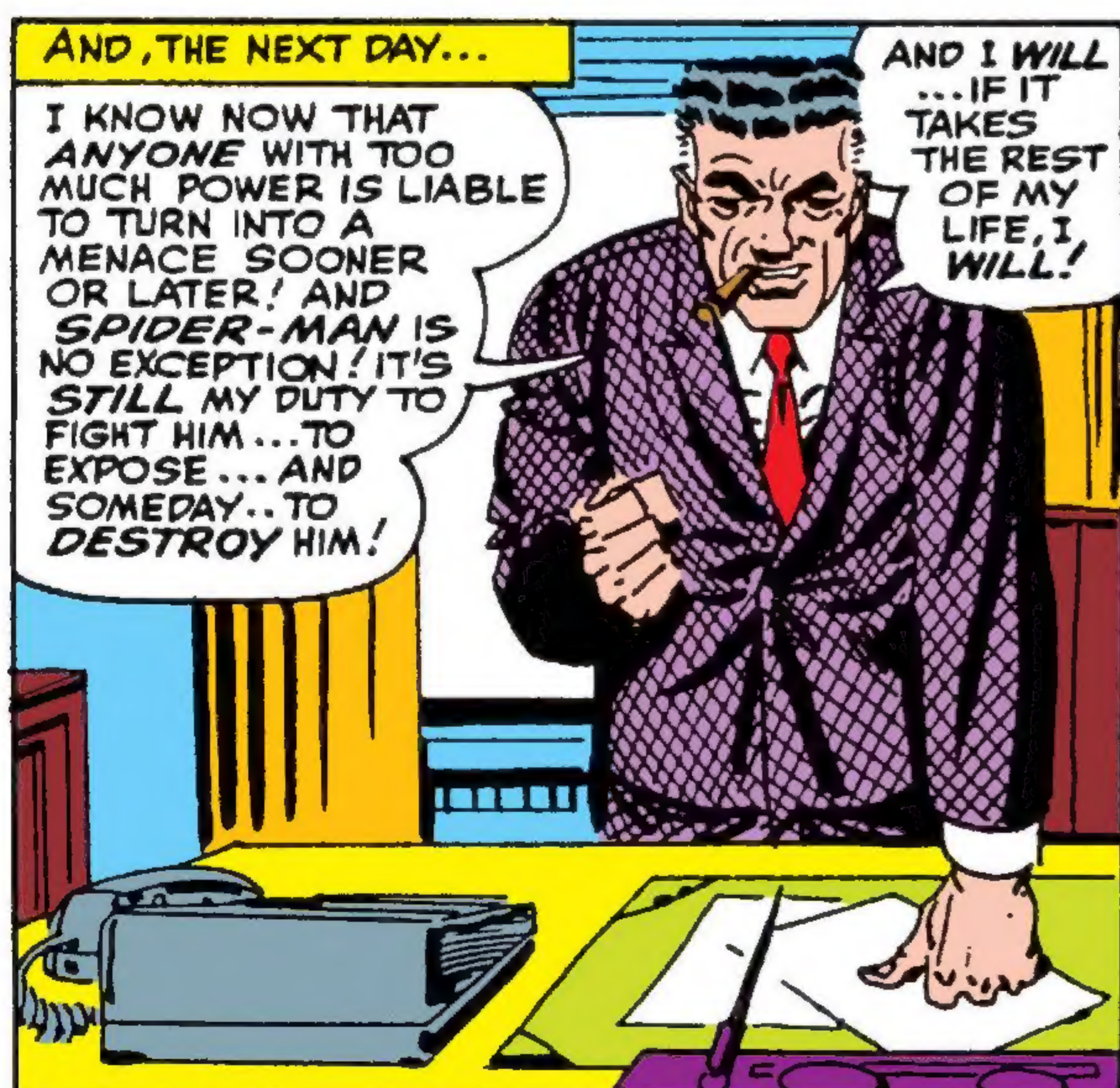
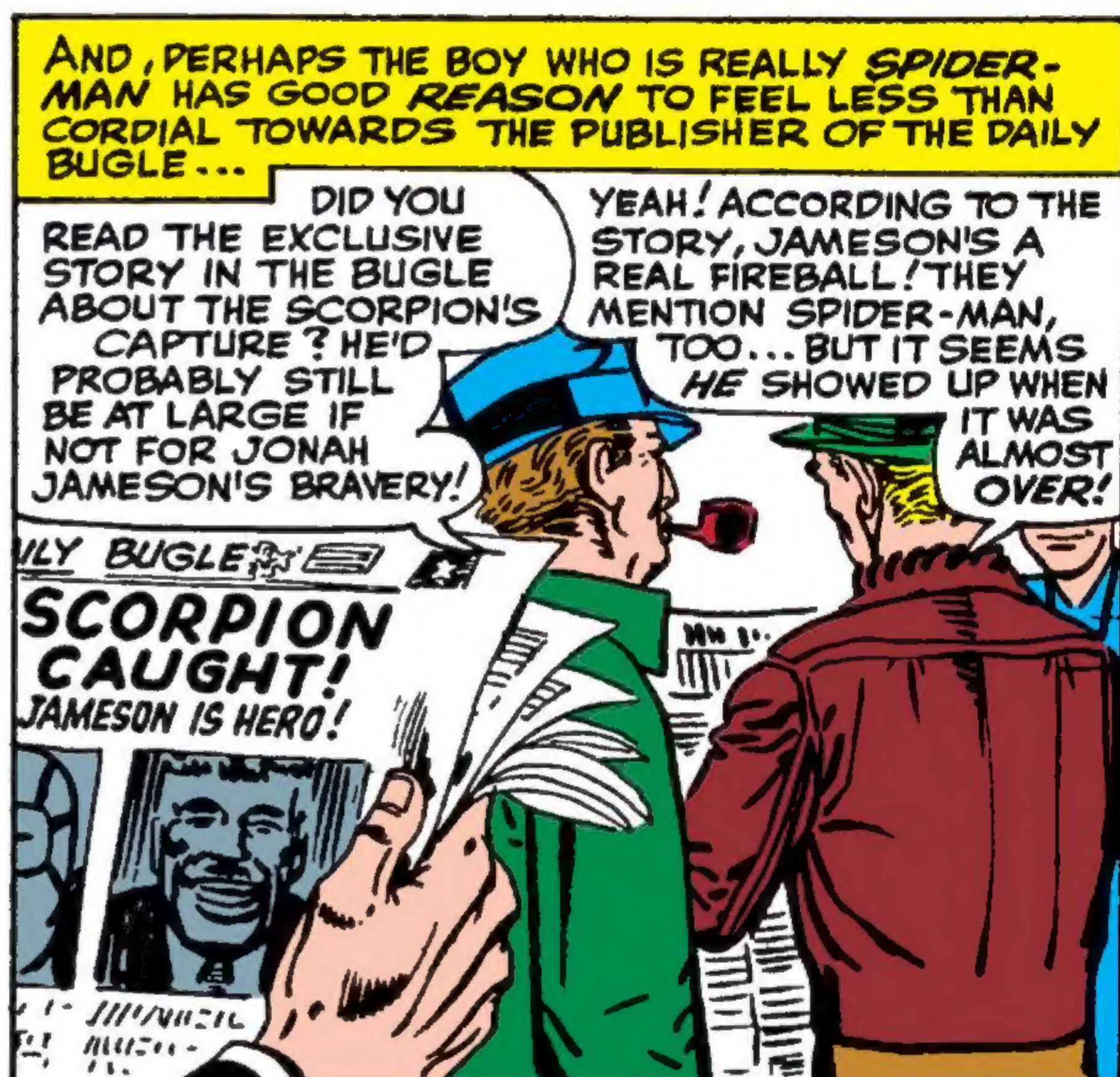
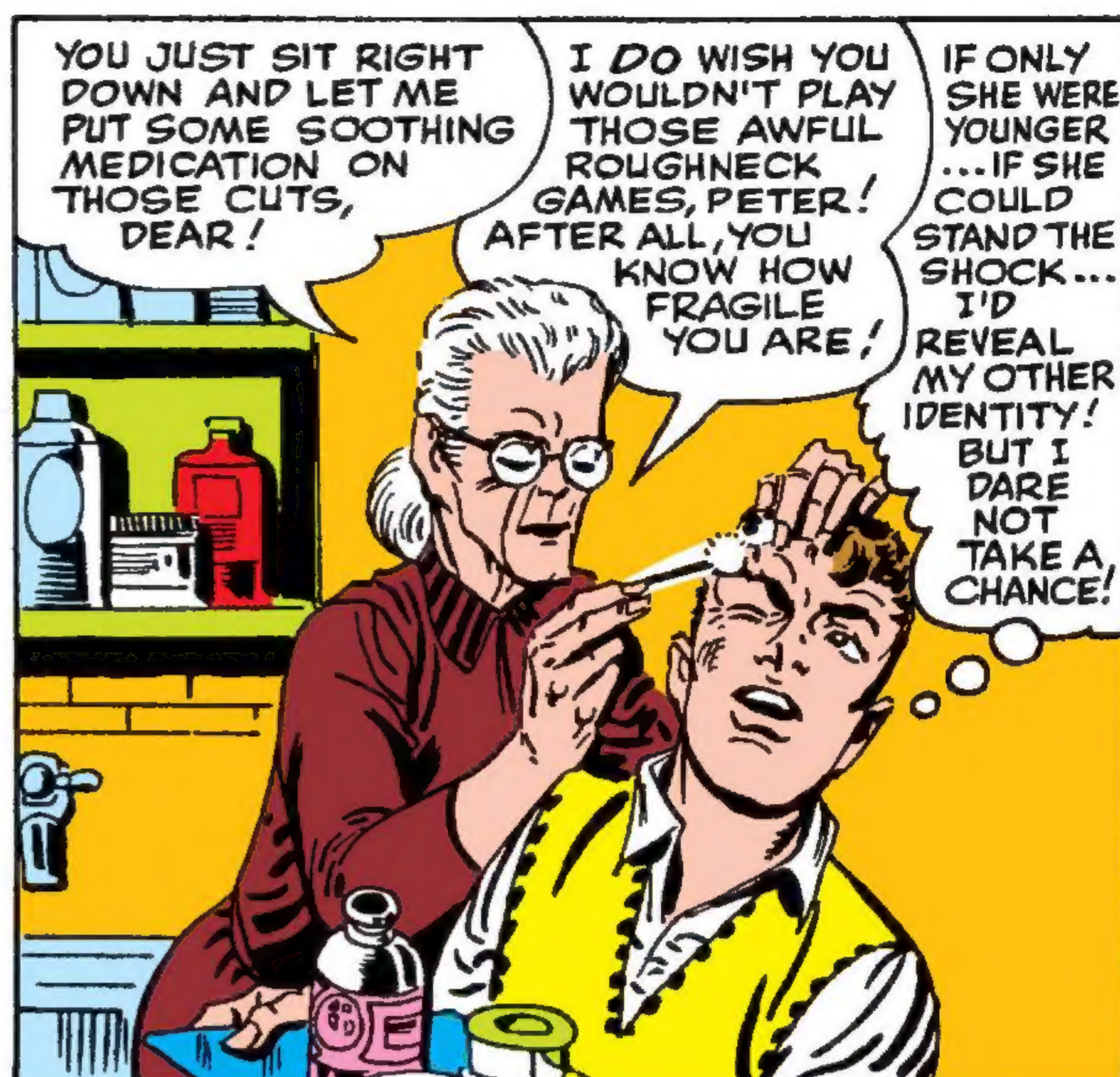
HERE'S WHERE I PUT YOU AWAY FOR GOOD, LITTLE MAN!









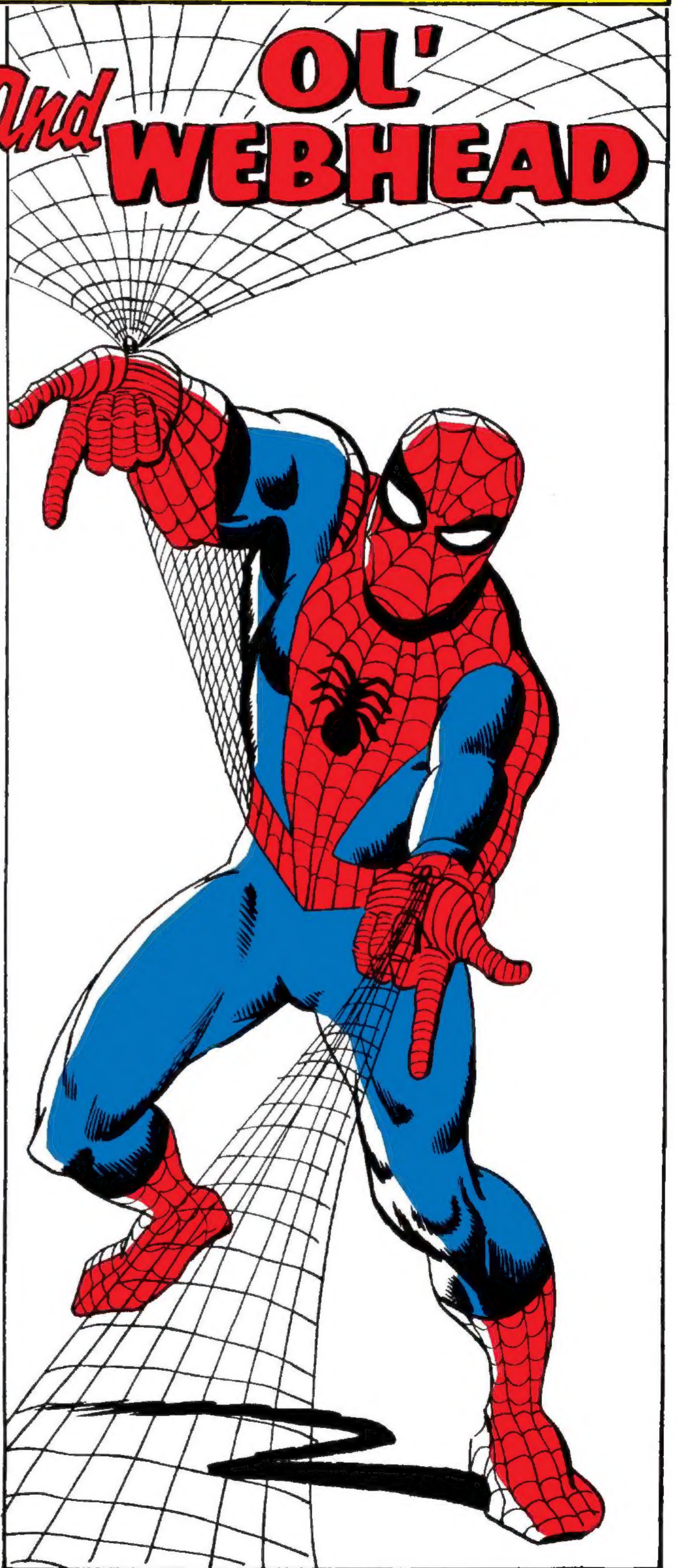


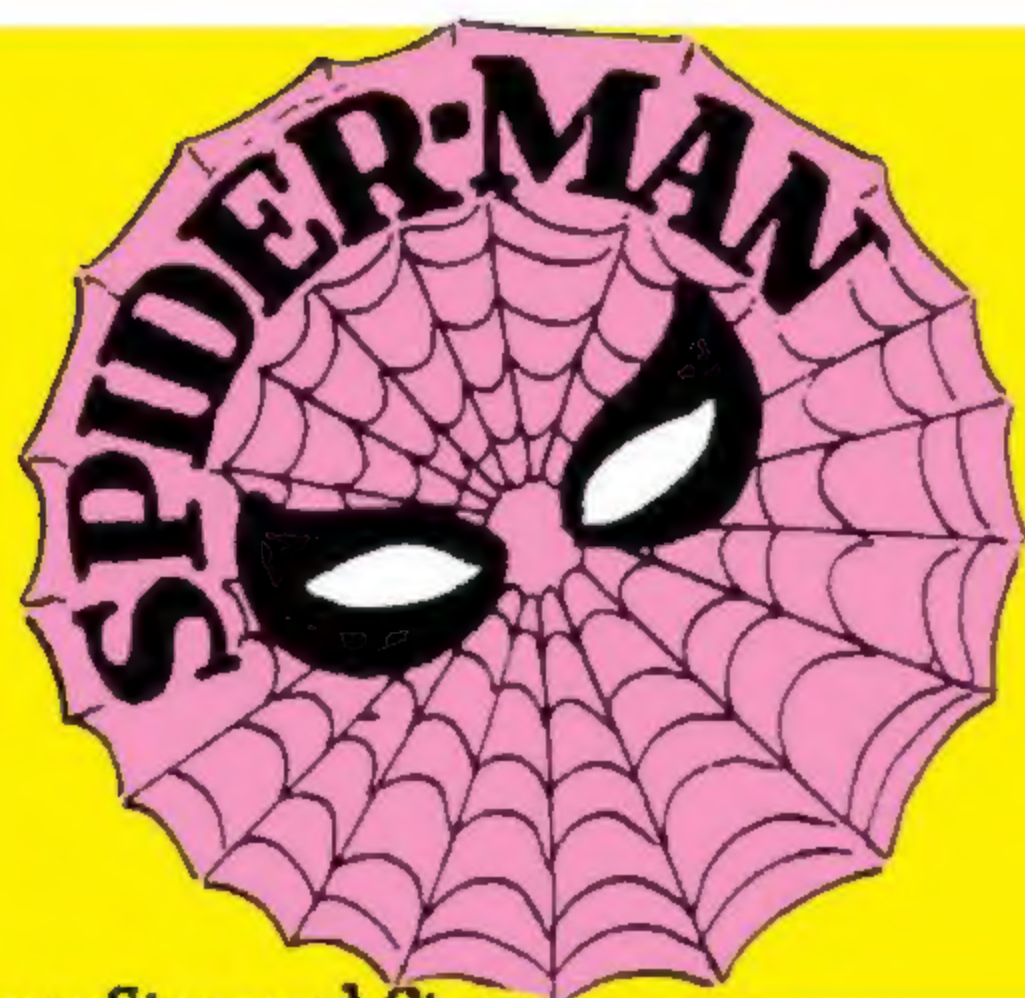
A MARVEL MASTERWORK PiN-UP

**PETER
PARKER**



And **OL'
WEBHEAD**





SPIDER'S WEB

Dear Stan and Steve,

Just a note to let you know how much your comics are appreciated here at Wabash College. This is an all-men's school so we have to do something for entertainment — your comics are cheaper than movies and almost as relaxing. Your unparalleled imaginations and talent for flip-pant remarks have drawn a loyal (if somewhat neurotic) following—almost all of us in the Fiji house here.

Rhiman A. Rotz, Jr., Phi Gamma Delta
Wabash College, Crawfordsville, Ind.

Good to hear from you fellow neurotics! By the way, keep your eyes peeled. Peter Parker will have to go to college sooner or later, and you might see him skippin' around the campus at Wabash some day!

Dear Stan and Steve,

I am pleased with your latest issues of Spider-Man. By the way, why don't you keep a column for "Pen Friends"? If you do, please write my name and address and also my hobbies, which are: collecting stamps, reading, and dancing. My age is 13. Please find me about 5 to 8 pen friends in America.

Imtiaz Alladina, P.O. Box No. 367
Tanga., Tanganyika, East Africa

Immy, old buddy, we don't usually list pen pals' names. If we did, we'd have room for almost nothing else! But, when we get a request from someone as far away as Tanganyika, we've just got to print the letter! We're delighted that Spidey has readers in East Africa—and, if he ever wants to go someplace for an exotic vacation, who knows—?

Dear Stan and Steve,

"Warning!! If you don't say this is one of the greatest issues you've ever read, we may never talk to you again!" Well, I guess you're never going to talk to me again, because Spider-Man #16 wasn't one of the greatest issues I've ever read; it was *the* absolute greatest aggregate of paper, printers' ink, staples, and just plain hard work put into comic book form that I have ever read! I have read literally *thousands* of comics, and of all of them, I can truthfully say that issue #16 of Spider-Man was the best *single* comic of all! The cover was magnificent, and I am at a complete loss of words to express my feelings concerning the story! No doubt the key word to the incredible Marvel success formula is *action*! When I buy a comic, that's the reason why and I'm glad you guys know it and take advantage of your knowledge! If there's only one thing in this world I like, it's swashbuckling, devil-may-care action, and brother, do you give it to us! Stan Lee is truly the master of the spoken word! He has to be, to come up with the wild, daring, and beautifully human yet comical speech which pours forth from the Spider-Man's lips in every panel. I've really got to congratulate you on the fine job you've done!

Ken Dixon, 674 Buttonwood Drive
Springfield, Pa. 19064

Well, it happened again, Ken! Stan's head just swelled to a still bigger size! He's beginning to look like one of our own sci-fi men of the future, and it's all your fault!

Dear Stan and Steve,

In the name of humanity, stop it!! I am talking about the long, agonizing wait between the issues of Spider-Man. Just last month, twelve people committed suicide because they couldn't stand the wait. And that was just on our block! We faithful fans must have at least a weekly supply of Spider-Man adventures, or we all may become unhinged. For no other mag is so skillfully prepared and so thoroughly enjoyed. How you can surpass yourselves time

after time is a mystery in itself, but ours is not to make reply, ours is not to reason why, ours is but to read and buy.

Mark Harkins, 5121 Holmes Runn Pkwy,
Alexandria, Virginia

A truly beautiful letter, Mark, eloquent in its simplicity, shattering in its power, radiant in its shining truth! There's not a dry eye in the bullpen, lad!

Dear Stan and Steve,

Wow!! What a comic!! Spidey is the *greatest*!! He is so realistic and human, it is almost as though there actually *were* a Spider-Man. I really enjoy reading all of your Marvel comics, but Spidey is my favorite. I am one of your most loyal fans.

John Turner, 3124 Colfax
Topeka, Kansas

Some loyal fan!!! So, it's almost as though there actually *were* a Spider-Man, eh? And just who do you think Petey Parker is, Johnny — one of the Katzenjammer Kids?

Dear Stan and Steve,

We are all gathered here (I am, at least) to pay tribute to Mr. Stan Lee and Mr. Steve Ditko, who have done a truly magnificent job on the recent Spider-Man Annual. The main story of the Sinister Six (Boy! What names you guys think up!) was great, great, great. I mean Super-Duper! I liked especially the full page scenes Spidey had with each of the baddies, like that one on page 16. That was the best picture of the story, I think. (Not that the others weren't great, Steve.) Steve did a wonderful job on the Fantastic Four, better than he's ever done before. The story was terrific all-around, *except* that you should have had all of the Sinister Six battle Spidey at once. That would have had great action! By the way, thanks for your informative "Secrets of Spider-Man" section! It answered a lot of my questions. Also, thanks for the "Gallery of Spider-Man's Most Famous Foes," and that funny "How Stan Lee and Steve Ditko Create Spider-Man." One last comment: Why does Stan Lee always get top billing? (I love to start arguments.)

Gary Rafferty, 19 120th Street
Troy, N.Y.

Because Stan is so talented, lovable, clever, and witty! (And mainly because he's the bullpen boss!)

Dear Stan and Steve,

Y'know, when I read the Spider-Man Annual, I felt sorry for you guys, because it's going to be pretty hard to outdo yourselves now. Let's face it — it was beyond a shadow of a doubt the most colorful, ironic, motion-packed story that I have ever had the chance to read. Well, first I'll give you my praises, and then my punches. The plot was more interwoven than Spidey's web, and it was simply amazing how you could write it. You were probably up every night since March doing the darned story. It was very nice of you guys to keep the introductory paragraph down to an arrowful. The art was something I've never seen before. Those full-page action fights were the greatest masterpieces I've seen in many a good year, and I'm sure any comic collector would praise it. You should have all those pictures bronzed, or put them in the Westinghouse time capsule. The script was unique — the jargon of the different heroes and villains was interesting, and each character had practically a different tongue. Aunt May's opinion of Doc Ock was refreshing, and offered a sense of frustration to most every reader. J.J.J. always amuses me. I wonder if he is symbolic of someone whom you don't take a particular craving to. Well, so far you must be patting yourselves on the back, but don't strain yourselves,

Continued...

because I now have a few choice words to say to you about how you botched the whole thing up. Why did you put those ads in the corners of the panels? That was undoubtedly the most foolish move you could have made. Here, I'm concentrating on the story, when my train of thought is interrupted by: "The X-Men appear bi-monthly in their own feature-length magazine." I should think that mostly everybody knows where to look for the Marvel characters. Second—it seems to me that Professor X is a rather close-minded man, or else he wouldn't have told the X-Men to ignore the Torch's message. What if he heard (for the sake of argument), that the world was to explode, and that the Avengers should come to action. Would Prof. X just disregard it? I assume not. Another bit of irritation is that Doc Ock can mentally control his arms. Every issue you make the villain stronger. How about making the hero weaker? One more thing—I think it would be of interest if Spidey revealed his identity to either Aunt May or Betty Brant. It would be interesting to see how you could handle a story like that. Well, I'm clean out of comments, so expect another letter when the next Annual comes out!

Charles Lichtman, 1261 Merriam Ave.
Bronx, N.Y.

Take it easy, Charlie—we may not be finished reading *this* letter by the time the next annual comes out! Anyway, as far as Spidey revealing his true identity to Betty or mirthful Aunt May, we'd kinda like to get some more opinions from some more of you web-spinners. And our guess is that most of you *won't* want him to tell! We'll give the result later on—okay?

MEMO FROM THE M.M.M.S.

("Merry Marvel Marching Society" to you!)

Things are going great guns with our new Marvel Club! We have all sorts of special surprises and off-beat treats planned! But we want to wait till next ish before our official membership application coupon appears. (This will give us time to make sure that all the comments and ideas we asked you for have been received and read.) But, we can tell you this much: membership will be one dollar! (Making it possibly the most expensive club of its type!) So start saving your loose change now! But, for gosh sakes, we don't want your buck unless you can easily afford it. If you're strapped for cash, forget it! You can join a month later, or a year later! You won't miss anything important! There'll be no secret code messages which only Marvel Marchers can understand, or any other juvenile jazz like that! But for those of you who do join we guarantee a million laughs and a barrel of fun! So, watch for our big full-page official announcement next month, describing the club in detail and containing our first publicly-offered membership coupon! We have a hunch that the ol' M.M.M.S. will be the biggest thing since squirrel tails! But, as always, it's up to you! 'Nuff said!

Dear Stan and Steve,

May I congratulate you on your new villain, the Green Goblin. He is one of the best crooks you've ever created. Could you have Spider-Man meet up with the Scarecrow? In my opinion, the Scarecrow is the most original villain ever created. Among my favorite comic villains are Dr. Doll, Dr. Doom, the Enforcers, Mystério, and the Wizard. I think all your comics are top rate. I am not an American, by the way. I am Italian, but I go to an American school. Since my mother is from the U.S., I learned English at school, although I've never been in America. Will your comics ever be translated? I hope so, because buying them in English gets rather expensive. Well, I guess I'm getting carried away, so I better quit while I'm ahead. My best wishes from Rome, and keep up the good work.

Aldo Falchin, 163 Viale Cogley
Rome, Italy

We'll look into the matter of translating our mags for you. Also, we didn't know the English versions were so expensive in Italy. And, as for Spidey meeting some of those other villains you named, you know how t' mags are in the Marvel mags — if he lives long enough, he'll probably meet *all* of them! Arrivederci!

Dear Stan and Steve,

I've been reading the letters about having Spider-Man join a team. I say having Spider-Man join a team is like

having Jonah Jameson dating Aunt May!

Sandy Loomis, Rt. 2, Box 252
Roswell, N.M.

Say, now! *There's* an idea! It's about time Aunt May found herself a fella! Now, if she can just get over her crush on Doc Ock . . .!



SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS SECTION:

—Can you guess what one of the most agonizing feelings in the world is?? Well, we'll tell you—it's having a special announcements section to write when you haven't anything special to announce! Oh well—we'll think of *something*!

—One thing we always get a kick out of is the occasional fan who writes in to demand that we give sunny Steve some more strips to draw! Poor ol' darling' Ditko does about twenty pages of Spidey each month—plus ten pages of Dr. Strange—plus ten pages of the Hulk—and he *still* finds time to argue with Stan for a few hours each week! If he gets one more thing to do, he'll either have to run for the hills, or grow another set of arms like Doc Ock! (And then we'd have to give him a raise, because you know how expensive four-armed suits are!) But, speaking of artists—don't dare miss our newest addition to the magnificent Marvel line-up! He's none other than the famous Wally Wood, whose illustrations have been featured in MAD and many other of the nation's top mags! And, if you wanna find out what he's going to draw, you'll have to read our coming attractions section which is on this page. (Just another new sneaky Marvel device to make sure you read *everything* we write!)

THE MIGHTY MARVEL CHECKLIST!

A Line-Up Of Some Of The Marvel-ous Mags On Sale Right Now:

FANTASTIC FOUR #34: The World's Greatest Comic Mag presents a startlingly different theme, in which the fabulous foursome are forced to battle each other! You will also thrill to the strangely fascinating villainy of the man called Gideon!

AVENGERS #11: All we need tell you about *this* one is that the Avengers battle Spider-Man! No matter how we brag about it, you're sure to rave even more!

DAREDEVIL #5: You'll never forgive yourself if you miss famous artist Wally Wood's first appearance in the Marvel Age, as he brings new grandeur to Daredevil's breath-taking battle with . . . the Matador!

THOR #111: The one you've been waiting for! Fighting-mad as never before, with the girl he loves dying, mighty Thor strikes back at the Cobra and Mr. Hyde with all the awesome power at his command!

STRANGE TALES #128: A real treat for X-Men fans! The Torch and the Thing battle Quicksilver and the Scarlet Witch! As for Dr. Strange, he has his hands full when he faces the Demon's Disciple! Truly an epic issue!

SUSPENSE #61: All we dare tell you about the sensational Iron Man thriller is that you'll learn what happens to the Golden Avenger when Tony Stark dies! And, in answer to so many requests, Captain America will be seen in a gripping war adventure reminiscent of the days of his former glory!

ASTONISH #63: Everyone's talking about the way talented artist Carl Burgos is breathing new life into the Giant-Man feature. You're sure to enjoy High-Pockets' tussle with the Wrecker! Meantime, the sensational Hulk meets his most dangerous enemy in "A Titan Rides The Train!" You'll love it!

SGT. FURY #12: This is it! At last the Howlers meet Captain America in the battle drama of the year! Buy this one early. It's certain to be a sell-out!

—Okay, time now for the really *big* news—a hint of what you'll find in the next ish of SPIDER-MAN! And a hint is all you'll get, because it's all you'll need! We'll tell you only one thing—Spidey #21 will feature none other than—THE HUMAN TORCH!! Better be sure to buy it the first week it goes on sale—it won't last much longer! But you needn't become a nervous wreck till then! We won't mind a bit if you buy our other Marvel mags while you're waiting!